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FOR

Allen J. Litchfield

The Life and Works of Thomas Paine

Patriots' Edition

VOLUME I

LIFE OF THOMAS PAINE

By William M. Van der Weyde

WITH AN

INTRODUCTION

By Thomas A. Edison

NEW ROCHELLE, NEW YORK
Thomas Paine National Historical Association
1925

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LIFE OF THOMAS PAINE

INTRODUCTION

IT IS, indeed, a privilege to me to be permitted to say a few words by way of introduction to this new biography of a man whom I have always regarded as one of the greatest of all Americans. Never have we had a sounder intelligence in this republic.

It was my good fortune to encounter Thomas Paine's works in my boyhood. I discovered a set of the writings of Paine on my father's bookshelves when I was thirteen. It was, indeed, a revelation to me to read that great thinker's views on political and theological subjects. Paine educated me then about many matters of which I had never before thought. I remember very vividly the flash of enlightenment that shone from Paine's writings, and I recall thinking at that time "What a pity these works are not today the school-books for all children!" My interest in Paine and his writings was not satisfied by my first reading of his works. I went back to them time and again, just as I have done since my boyhood days.

Paine's works are a crystallization of acute human reasoning, and they will surely be appreciated more

and more as the awakening world reads what he has written.

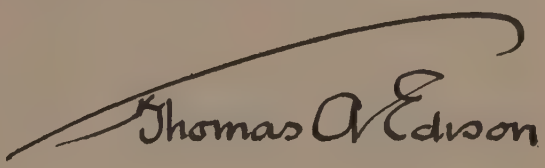
I have, of course, always been much interested in Paine as an inventor, and I am glad that there is a separate chapter in this biography which reveals this side of the great man's mental activities. It is a phase of the brilliant author's ingenious mind which has been obscured to a great extent by the splendor of his other works. Important as were some of Paine's mechanical inventions, they seem to me of minor interest, however, when we consider "Common Sense," and Paine's planning of this great American republic, of which he may very justly be termed the real founder.

Paine was too great a libertarian to be satisfied with the independence of America, so he went abroad and sought freedom for England with his "Rights of Man." There he was outlawed and hung in effigy for his pains, but "Rights of Man" is today, as has been pointed out, the living Constitution of modern England.

For writing his next great book, "Age of Reason," an important theological work, Paine was burnt in effigy, and was vilified outrageously. But we need only recall the life-stories of the world's great reformers, from Christ down, who have been crucified

and burned at the stake, to realize that "the world moves," as Galileo, one of the noblest of the victims of intolerance, insisted, and we may rest assured that, if Thomas Paine did not receive a just measure of appreciation in his lifetime, the world has at last commenced to properly appraise his worth and importance, as is exemplified by this new biography, and the new edition of Paine's writings.

Thomas Paine should be read by his countrymen.



LIFE OF THOMAS PAINE

CHAPTER I

The First 37 Years

Birth....Parentage....Early Life in England....The Lure of the Sea....Death of First Wife....Becomes an Excise Officer ....Second Marriage....Memorializes Parliament for Excisemen....Meets Oliver Goldsmith....Dismissed from the Excise ....Business Difficulties....Separation from Wife....Meets Franklin....Leaves for America.

O glowing star stood still over Thetford, England, on January 29, 1737, in token of an extraordinary event. No wise men journeyed from afar to the humble dwelling of Frances Paine to lay gifts at the feet of her new-born child.

The village doctor visited the house and a few neighbors looked casually in. But the doctor and the Norfolkshire neighbors—by no means wise men—treated the event as a most ordinary matter and, being without the gift of prophecy, foresaw and foretold no career for the babe of Frances Paine as a saviour of humanity.

The parents and the doctor and the visiting neighbors little suspected that the tiny infant they gazed upon would some day fire the temper of a whole

people into resistance against tyranny. That he would call an American nation into being and that his utterances would mould the characters and fashion the high thoughts of great leaders to guide that new nation through war and disaster to peace and security. That he would calm the Paris mob with his counsel and draft a bill of rights for the French Republic. That he would be proscribed in the country of his birth and that men and women would suffer imprisonment for disseminating his writings against tyranny and injustice. That for a whole century he would rest under the shadow of an eclipse and then emerge triumphant as one of the great liberators of the human race.

The child was Thomas Paine and today three great nations, America, England and France, claim him as a distinguished citizen.

Not much is known concerning the parents of Thomas Paine. His father, Joseph Paine,* was a Quaker, the son of a Norfolkshire farmer. He was a staymaker at Thetford, of good reputation, indus-

* The family name was undoubtedly PAIN. Thomas Paine's father so spelt his name, and so did Thomas and other members of the family. When Thomas Paine lived in Lewes, just previous to his coming to America, he signed his name "Thomas Pain." There is a letter written at Lewes in 1771 in which the name is so signed. On the marriage register of St. Michael's Church, Lewes, may be seen the signatures of Thomas Pain and Elizabeth

trious and poor. The boy's mother was a member of the Church of England, daughter of a Thetford attorney. Joseph Paine and Frances Cocke were married in the little church of Euston Parish, near Thetford, on June 20, 1734. Elizabeth, a sister of Thomas, was born August 29, 1738. There are no records concerning Elizabeth, save the date of her birth and baptism, and it is likely that she died in infancy.

Thomas Paine attended the Grammar School in Thetford. There, under the tutelage of William Knowle, he learned elementary arithmetic, reading and writing. He had no liking for languages, and a very distinct aversion to the dead tongues. Several times in the course of his writings, in later years, Paine speaks reminiscently of his school days. In the following extract he mentions his distaste for studying languages:

"My parents were not able to give me a shilling, beyond what they gave me in education; and to do this they distressed themselves.

Ollive, recording their marriage there March 26, 1771. Thomas Paine at this period had the habit of ending his signature with a little flourish which somewhat resembled the letter "e," and which was, no doubt, sometimes mistaken for an "e." This may explain the origin of the present spelling of the name. The earliest letters signed Thomas Paine with the final "e" are dated late in 1775.

"My father being of the Quaker profession, it was my good fortune to have an exceeding good moral education, and a tolerable stock of useful learning. Though I went to the grammar school (the same school, Thetford in Norfolk, that the present counsellor Mingay went to, and under the same master), I did not learn Latin, not only because I had no inclination to learn languages, but because of the objection the Quakers have against the books in which the language is taught. But this did not prevent me from being acquainted with the subjects of all the Latin books used in the school. The natural bent of my mind was to science. I had some turn, and I believe some talent, for poetry; but this I rather repressed than encouraged, as leading too much into the field of imagination.

"I happened, when a schoolboy, to pick up a pleasing natural history of Virginia, and my inclination from that day of seeing the western side of the Atlantic never left me." *

From his Quaker father, of whom there is evidence that he was very fond, and from his careful ethical training and Quaker environment, there is no doubt that Paine derived much of the high moral principle that is discernible throughout his career.

The political corruption, not only of the nation but of little Thetford itself (then a town of only 2000 inhabitants), was common talk among the townsfolk,

* In later years Paine wrote more fully concerning the folly of studying dead languages. ("Age of Reason," Part I, Vol. VIII, page 59.)

and the keen-minded, bright-eyed schoolboy noted what he saw and heard. He learned with horror of capital punishments—in those days not infrequently accompanied by the infliction of savage tortures—and only in Quaker meetings did he note any protest against these outrages.

On his way to and from the old schoolhouse the child passed the town stocks and the pillory, and he daily heard the screams of terrified and suffering prisoners. The gallows, too, was close by the school and the oaths and shrieks of victims in one or another, or all three, of the punishment machines, could be plainly heard in the children's classrooms. It was not pleasant music to the sensitive ears of a child.

There is no doubt that what Thomas Paine saw and heard as a schoolboy made a deep impression upon his mind. To the wrongs of man, as noted by a child, we may readily trace Paine's later championship of the rights of man. The spirit of the reformer and revolutionist was engendered in those early years in Thetford. His was, indeed, not a joyful childhood. Had his youth been happier than it was, it is more than likely that the world would never have heard of Thomas Paine.

At the age of thirteen the boy was taken from school and put to work in his father's staymaking

shop. There he remained for four years, but the work was irksome. While he labored at the bench he dreamt of wondrous tales of life at sea told him by Master Knowle, his teacher at the old Thetford grammar school, who had in former years been a chaplain aboard a man-o'-war. The outcome was the shipping of the lad aboard the *Terrible*, a privateer, under the command of Captain Death. This inauspicious conjunction of names seems to have had no deterrent effect upon the youth eager for adventure. His father, hearing, however, of the project, hurried to the vessel, and dissuaded the boy from his purpose, taking him back to his Thetford home. Paine in later years mentions the episode ("Rights of Man," part II, chap. V):

"Raw and adventurous, and heated with the false heroism of a master who had served in a man-of-war, I became the carver of my own fortune, and entered on board the *Terrible*, privateer, Captain Death. From this adventure I was happily prevented by the affectionate and moral remonstrance of a good father, who, from his own habits of life, being of the Quaker profession, must begin to look upon me as lost."

Happily prevented, indeed, for the *Terrible* on her next cruise, in an engagement with the *Vengeance*, lost one hundred and seventy-five of her two hundred

men, the remaining twenty-five being all wounded, and her captain killed.

The fever for adventure at sea still beset the boy, however, and not very long afterwards, in 1756, when war against France was declared, Paine went to sea on the privateer *King of Prussia*, Captain Mendez. Little is known of the adventure beyond this bare fact. He did not return to his home, but on the abatement of his nautical fever secured employment with a London staymaker. In 1758 he worked in Dover and a year later established himself as a master staymaker in Sandwich, Kent. There he met and married, September 27, 1759, Mary Lambert, an orphan. Paine was then only twenty-two years old. The following year, at Margate, whither Paine had removed his business, his wife died.

The business not prospering, Paine determined to abandon staymaking as an occupation and seek appointment as an exciseman. After a brief course of study he was appointed to the excise December 1, 1764.

Paine found the work of an excise officer in those days arduous enough, and the pay by no means commensurate. The rounds of the district he covered were made on horseback. He soon learned that other excisemen were in the habit of sometimes entering

on their reports surveys not actually made. Paine confessed he had, himself, made such an entry and he was dismissed from the service. He applied for re-instatement and early in 1766 was restored to the service. No vacancy was found for him, however, until the following year, when an appointment to a Cornwall post was offered him. He preferred to wait for some other vacancy and on February 19, 1768, was made excise officer at Lewes, in Sussex. There Paine took up his residence with an aged Quaker, Samuel Ollive, a tobacconist. Mr. Ollive died the following year, leaving, in poor circumstances, a widow and one daughter.

On March 26, 1771, Paine married Mr. Ollive's daughter, Elizabeth, at St. Michael's Church, Lewes, and he continued there in the tobacco business. The family dwelt over the little shop. The old house has recently (1922) been restored. There is a large open fireplace which had been built entirely of bricks taken from the old chimney. In the hearth is set an old millstone, which bears this inscription, "This stone, found here, probably formed part of the tobacco mill of Thomas Paine."

The original rough oak beams and oaken doors have been carefully preserved. A room is still known as Thomas Paine's bedroom. The house was known,

at one period of its history, as Bull Tavern, and although the people of Lewes still speak of it as "The Bull," its fame rests chiefly on the fact that there Paine at one time lived. A bronze tablet on the front of the house records the fact that Paine lived in this house 1768-1774.

Here Paine wrote, 1772, his first pamphlet, "The Case of the Officers of Excise," a plea to the British Parliament in behalf of the overworked and underpaid excisemen. This statement of the excisemen's situation was written at the request of Paine's fellow-workers in the excise, who at that early date seem to have recognized Paine's fine understanding and genius for expression. It is lucid, simple and forceful. Paine journeyed to London as soon as the document was printed, in the hope of bringing the subject before Parliament, and securing for the excisemen some redress of grievances.* When Paine had the plea for the excisemen printed he sent a copy to the famous Oliver Goldsmith with the following letter:

"HONORED SIR,—Herewith I present you with the Case of the Officers of Excise. A compliment of this kind from

*Although it was printed for use in Parliament, the "plea" was not published as a pamphlet until 1793, when a London publisher resurrected Paine's work after he had become celebrated as the author of "Rights of Man."

an entire stranger may appear somewhat singular, but the following reasons and information will, I presume, sufficiently apologize. I act myself in the humble station of an officer of excise, though somewhat differently circumstanced to what many of them are, and have been the principal promoter of a plan for applying to Parliament this session for an increase of salary. A petition for this purpose has been circulated through every part of the kingdom, and signed by all the officers therein. A subscription of three shillings per officer is raised, amounting to upwards of £500, for supporting the expenses. The excise officers, in all cities and corporate towns, have obtained letters of recommendation from the electors to the members in their behalf, many or most of whom have promised their support. The enclosed case we have presented to most of the members, and shall to all, before the petition appears in the Houses. The memorial before you met with so much approbation while in manuscript, that I was advised to print 4000 copies; 3000 of which were subscribed for the officers in general, and the remaining 1000 reserved for presents. Since the delivering them I have received so many letters of thanks and approbation for the performance, that were I not rather singularly modest, I should insensibly become a little vain. The literary fame of Dr. Goldsmith has induced me to present one to him, such as it is. It is my first and only attempt, and even now I should not have undertaken it, had I not been particularly applied to by some of my superiors in office. I have some few questions to trouble Dr. Goldsmith with, and should esteem his company for an hour or two, to partake of a bottle of wine, or any thing else, and

apologize for this trouble, as a singular favor conferred on

"His unknown

"Humble servant and admirer,

"THOMAS PAINE.

Excise Coffee House,

"Broad Street, Dec. 21, 1772.

"P.S. Shall take the liberty of waiting on you in a day or two." *

Paine passed the entire winter of 1772-3 in London endeavoring to interest members of the House in the cause of the excisemen. He was both chagrined and disappointed when, all his labors proving fruitless, he returned to his home in Lewes. There he found his business had suffered greatly during his stay in London. Trade at the little shop had almost entirely ceased, and debts had accumulated. The situation was sufficiently distressful in itself when early in April, 1774, Paine was again dismissed from the excise.

This was the wording of the order of discharge:

"Friday 8th April 1774. Thomas Pain, Officer of Lewes 4th O. Ride Sussex Collection having quitted his Business,

* Goldsmith responded and the two writers became friends. About a year later Goldsmith died, and Paine was probably the friend to whom he gave shortly before his death the humorous epitaph commencing "Here Whitefoord reclines," which Paine, as editor of the *Pennsylvania Magazine*, printed in an early number of that monthly periodical.

without obtaining the Board's Leave for so doing, and being gone off on Account of the Debts which he hath contracted, as by Letter of the 6th instant from Edward Clifford, Supervisor, and the said Pain having been once before Discharged, Ordered that he be again discharged."

In danger of arrest for debts of the little shop, Paine had left town for a brief interval but only that he might arrange for turning over to creditors all of his property. This done, he returned to Lewes and his entire possessions, including even his household furniture, came under the auctioneer's hammer April 14th.

These troubles were indeed serious enough, but they were to be immediately succeeded by domestic difficulties. In less than two months after the auction sale of Paine's effects Paine and his wife formally separated. This was on the fourth of June. The reasons for the separation are veiled in mystery. Conjectures of many kinds have been made as to the underlying causes but they have remained merely guesses. Neither Paine nor his wife ever spoke of the matter and it will doubtless forever remain an enigma. Paine's intimate friend, Clio Rickman, of London,—one of his early biographers—once alluded to the subject in conversation with Paine and received a reply that precluded further inquiries. "It is no-

body's business but my own," said Paine; "I had cause for it but I will name it to no one."

Paine renounced all rights in the property his wife brought him at their marriage, and it is known that subsequent to their separation he sent her money anonymously.*

In the year 1800 Elizabeth Paine, an heir under the will of her father, Samuel Ollive, testified (in a Release to Francis Mitchener dated October 14):

"That the said Elizabeth Pain had ever since lived separate from him the said Thos. Pain, and never had any issue, and the said Thomas Pain had many years quitted this Kingdom and resided (if living) in parts beyond the seas, but had not since been heard of by the said Elizabeth Pain, nor was it known for certain whether he was living or dead."

It seems strange indeed that, with her husband one of the men most talked about in England during the last decade of the eighteenth century, Elizabeth Paine knew nothing whatever about him—not even whether he were living or dead.

Despite her profession of ignorance concerning his whereabouts, Elizabeth Paine could readily have con-

*Rickman records that "Mr. Paine always spoke tenderly and respectfully of his wife; and sent her several times pecuniary aid, without her knowing even whence it came."

jectured that it was her husband who for many years anonymously sent her money.

Upon separating from his wife Paine returned to London, where he had enjoyed the friendship of Benjamin Franklin, Oliver Goldsmith, David Williams and some other men of note.* In former visits to London Paine had developed a deep interest in science and he had an opportunity now to be with Dr. Franklin when some of the latter's electrical experiments were conducted. He again visited the Houses of Parliament, as a spectator and auditor, and listened attentively to the debates and proposals of measures.

Paine was now thirty-seven years old, practically penniless and with no prospect for the future. It was indeed no happy retrospect through the years to childhood days at the Thetford grammar school. Some radical change in his life was obviously and im-

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* There is no credible evidence as to who introduced Paine to Franklin, but it is quite likely that it was David Williams, principal of a school for boys at Chelsea, then a little town just outside of London. Williams was a Deist, with scientific and literary tastes. At his home in Chelsea it is probable that Paine and Franklin first met in 1774. Eight years later a tract on Political Liberty by David Williams was first published. It was translated into French by Jean Pierre Brissot, and in appreciation of his advanced ideas Williams was included with Paine, Priestley, Washington, Hamilton, Madison and a dozen others in the French Legislative Assembly's decree of August 26, 1792, honorarily electing these men French citizens.

peratively necessary. Dr. Franklin not only perceived this but he also appreciated the talents and genius of his friend, and the far-sighted philosopher was keenly alive to America's need of just such a spirit as Thomas Paine. He strongly urged the young man to migrate to America—thereby not only befriending Paine but at the same time conferring upon this country the greatest of the many obligations for which it is indebted to Franklin.

Despite Paine's lack of early advantages there was distinction in his manners, speech and appearance. He was a man of medium height and symmetrical proportions, with a high forehead, prominent nose and brilliant dark eyes. That he had unusually fine eyes is noted in the comments of several of his personal friends. Major General Charles Lee referred to Paine as "the man with genius in his eyes," and Clio Rickman, with whom Paine lived in London, wrote of him "his eye, of which the painter could not convey the exquisite meaning, was full, brilliant, and singularly piercing; it had in it 'the muse of fire.'" Johann Forster is quoted by Thomas Carlyle as noting the "uncommonly bright eyes" of Paine when he sat as a member of the French National Convention. Dr. Franklin, keen observer and analyst, detected the genius that shone in Paine's eyes, urged

him to seek his fortune in America, and gave him letters of introduction and recommendation to his friends in Philadelphia, and notably to Richard Bache, his son-in-law.

While Franklin remained, working for peace at the Court of St. James, he was sending to America, without realizing it, a firebrand whose writings were to crystalize the thought of the Colonists against peace. I do not find any comment of Franklin's upon the subject, but with his keen sense of humor, he could not have failed to enjoy the curious turn in affairs by which he himself had inadvertently frustrated his own peace mission.

Paine started on his trans-Atlantic journey in October, 1774, and arrived in America on November 30th.

CHAPTER II

The New World

Paine Presents Franklin's Letters of Introduction....Becomes Editor of the *Pennsylvania Magazine*....Writes Against Slavery (1775)....Ballad on Death of General Wolfe.... Inveighs Against Inequality of Sexes....Denounces Dueling.... Franklin Proud of Having Brought Paine to America.

A NEW world, a new life, a new birth!

All these were now before the storm-tossed stranger landing at America's gates. Half of man's proverbial allotment of three-score years and ten were gone, thirty-seven unhappy, disheartening years,—but they were gone forever!

A wondrous prospect unfolded itself before the immigrant's eyes in this land of promise. One of the first persons upon whom he called to pay his respects was Dr. Franklin's son-in-law. Paine presented to Richard Bache the letter from his sponsor in London. This letter was dated September 30, 1774, and read as follows:

"The bearer Mr. Thomas Paine is very well recommended to me as an ingenious worthy young man. He goes to Pennsylvania with a view of settling there. I request you to give him your best advice and countenance, as he is quite a stranger there. If you can put him in a

way of obtaining employment as a clerk, or assistant tutor in a school, or assistant surveyor, of all of which I think him very capable, so that he may procure a subsistence at least, till he can make acquaintance and obtain a knowledge of the country, you will do well, and much oblige your affectionate father."

That Paine was well received in Philadelphia is attested by the letter he wrote Franklin from that city on March 4, 1775:

"Your countenancing me has obtained for me many friends and much reputation, for which please accept my sincere thanks. I have been applied to by several gentlemen to instruct their sons on very advantageous terms to myself, and a printer and bookseller here, a man of reputation and property, Robert Aitkin, has lately attempted a magazine, but having little or no turn that way himself, he has applied to me for assistance. He had not above six hundred subscribers when I first assisted him. We have now upwards of fifteen hundred, and daily increasing. I have not entered into terms with him. This is only the second number. The first I was not concerned in."

The Pennsylvania Magazine, or American Museum, made its first appearance toward the end of January, 1775. As Paine mentions in his letter to Dr. Franklin, he was "not concerned" in the first number, but for eighteen months subsequently he was editor of the magazine and in its pages appeared many articles,

essays and poems from his pen. His salary was only fifty pounds ($250) a year.*

The magazine, under Paine's editorship, was sprightly and interesting, and had, moreover, real literary merit. Most of the articles written by Paine were published under various names in order that readers might not realize at once that most of the essays and letters were from the same pen. Those familiar with Paine's writings may, however, unmistakably recognize his style in the contributions that appeared under the names of "Vox Populi," "Æsop," "Atlanticus," etc. Quite a number of essays, also undoubtedly by Paine, were unsigned. The magazine made a feature of descriptions, with illustrations, of English inventions, such as a spinning-machine, an electrical machine, a threshing-machine, etc., the articles all being written by Paine. Through these writings Paine became acquainted with a circle of scientists in Philadelphia, among them Clymer, Rush, Rittenhouse and Muhlenberg, all members of the Philosophical Society which was founded by Franklin. Several of them became fast friends of the author.

The February number is prefaced with a medallion portrait of Paine's friend, Oliver Goldsmith, who had

* Probably no person ever before or since has produced, as Moncure Conway notes, so much good literary work for so meager compensation.

died in London shortly before Paine came to America.

Early in the year—on March 8, 1775—a notable essay by Paine on the subject of slavery, appeared in the *Postscript to the Pennsylvania Journal and Weekly Advertiser*. This essay, which was printed under the title of "African Slavery in America," was the first article published in this country urging the emancipation of slaves and the abolishment of the system of negro bondage. A few pamphlets had been published which inveighed against the traffic in slaves, and pointed out the cruelties of some slave-owners, among these being two pamphlets by Dr. Benjamin Rush; but none, previous to Paine's production, boldly advocated an end to the abhorrent practice. Thomas Paine was the first American abolitionist. Had his recommendation that slavery be abolished been then heeded, the nation's deplorable Civil War, which commenced eighty-six years later, had never occurred—a war costing several hundred thousand lives and several hundred million dollars.

Paine's anti-slavery essay was doubtless written very soon after his arrival in America in November, 1774, although it was not published until March of the following year. It is likely that, since slavery existed in all the colonies—there were 6000 slaves in Pennsylvania alone—the editor of the paper in

which the essay appeared hesitated and delayed its publication, eventually placing it in the *Postscript*. In all likelihood it was the first article that Paine ever wrote for publication.*

Dr. Benjamin Rush, in response to a letter from James Cheetham (author of a scurrilous so-called "Life of Thomas Paine") dated July 17, 1809, requesting information about his acquaintance with Paine, wrote as follows:

"About the year 1773 [the date is an error for 1774] I met him accidentally in Mr. Aitkin's bookstore, and was introduced to him by Mr. Aitkin. We conversed a few minutes, when I left him. Soon afterwards I read a short essay with which I was much pleased, in one of Bradford's papers, against the slavery of the Africans in our country, and which I was informed was written by Mr. Paine. This excited my desire to be better acquainted with him. We met soon after in Mr. Aitkin's bookstore, where I did homage to his principles and pen upon the subject of the enslaved Africans. He told me the essay to which I alluded was the first thing he had ever published in his life. After this Mr. Aitkin employed him as the editor of his Magazine, with a salary of fifty pounds currency a year. This work was well supported by him. His song upon the death of Gen. Wolfe, and his reflections upon the death

* "The Case of the Officers of Excise" was written not for publication but merely as a document for presentation to the British Parliament.

of Lord Clive, gave it a sudden currency which few works of that kind have since had in our country." *

Several humorous poems and other pieces that Paine wrote in Lewes for the amusement of the Headstrong Club, of which he was a prominent member, received their first publication in the *Pennsylvania Magazine*. His ballad "On the Death of General Wolfe" was printed with music in March, 1775, and achieved immediate popularity. Two months later he published in the magazine an article in which he points out the absurdity of titles.

"The Honorable plunderer of his country," he wrote, "or the Right Honorable murderer of mankind, create such a contrast of ideas as exhibit a monster rather than a man. . . . The lustre of the Star, and the title of My Lord, overawe the superstitious vulgar, and forbid them to enquire into the character of the possessor: Nay more, they are, as it were, bewitched to admire in the great the vices they would honestly condemn in themselves. . . . The reasonable freeman sees through the magic of a title, and examines the man before he approves him. To him the honors of the worthless seem to write their masters' vices in capitals, and their Stars shine to no other end than to read them by. Modesty forbids men separately, or

* Dr. Rush, writing this thirty-five years later, misinterprets what Paine said. Several articles preceded that on slavery in *publication*, although the slavery essay was doubtless *written* before the others.

collectively, to assume titles. But as all honors, even that of kings, originated from the public, the public may justly be called the true fountain of honor. And it is with much pleasure I have heard the title 'Honorable' applied to a body of men, who nobly disregarding private ease and interest for public welfare, have justly merited the address of *The Honorable Continental Congress.*"

Paine's Quaker training is discernible in what he says in the issue of July, 1775, regarding international peace and arbitration:

"I am thus far a Quaker, that I would gladly agree with all the world to lay aside the use of arms, and settle matters by negotiations; but, unless the whole world wills, the matter ends, and I take up my musket, and thank heaven he has put it in my power. . . . We live not in a world of angels. The reign of Satan is not ended, neither can we expect to be defended by miracles."

Paine published in the May number, 1775, a poetical protest against cruelty to animals. It is likely that Paine was himself the author. In the April issue appeared Paine's fable entitled "Cupid and Hymen," to be followed in June by "Reflections on Unhappy Marriages," the latter a dissertation sufficiently radical to be entirely appropriate to a reform magazine of today.

The first plea on behalf of women ever published in America appeared in the August number. The article is entitled "An Occasional Letter on the Fe-

male Sex." Paine undoubtedly wrote it, although it appears without signature. In this article Paine points out the injustice woman has suffered in her age-long subjection to man, and calls attention to the real equality of the sexes.

Another article shows how ridiculous as well as reprehensible is the practice of duelling—at that period still in vogue. The magazine teemed with "live" topics.

In Paine's early literary work—such essays and letters as he contributed to the *Pennsylvania Magazine* and the *Pennsylvania Journal*—we may clearly trace the keen mind and forceful pen which were soon to give the world some of its most distinguished writing.

Paine and Franklin remained fast friends to the time of Franklin's death in 1790. There is a letter of Franklin to Paine in the archives of the Philosophical Society in Philadelphia, written in reply to Paine's congratulations on his safe return from England. In it Franklin expresses his "esteem and affection" for Paine, and also his satisfaction that he was Paine's "introducer into America." He tells Paine he values himself on the share he (Franklin) had in procuring for America "the acquisition of so use-

ful and valuable a citizen." The letter has not been published heretofore. It reads as follows:

"Philadelphia, Sept. 27, 1775.

"Thomas Paine—Dear sir: Your kind congratulations on my safe return give me a great deal of pleasure; for I have always valued your friendship.

"The ease and rest you wish me to enjoy for the remainder of my days is certainly most proper for me. . . . As to my health, of which you kindly desire some information, it is as well as, at my age, can reasonably be expected. . . .

"Be assured, my dear friend, that instead of repenting that I was your introducer into America, I value myself on the share I had in procuring for it the acquisition of so useful and valuable a citizen.

"I shall be very glad to see you when you happen to be again at Philadelphia. With sincere esteem and affection, dear sir, Your most obedient and most humble servant.

B. FRANKLIN."

CHAPTER III

A Revolution in the Making

North Carolina's Rebellion is Smothered....The "Lexington Massacre"....Exasperated Colonists Continue to be Loyal.... Washington Still Against Separation from England.... Paine Writes the First Word About Independence.

THE arrival of Paine in America was indeed most timely. For several years prior to his advent the American colonies had been the victims of many impositions on the part of the British government. Not only had Great Britain levied crushing and unreasonable taxes upon her trans-Atlantic colonies, for her own benefit, but she had turned a deaf ear to all petitions and protestations. George III ruled from afar with an iron hand and stony heart. Several rebellions, brought on by British impositions, had already taken place, only to be crushed by British troops. A rebellion in 1771 in North Carolina cost the patriots two hundred lives before being crushed by Governor Tryon. Clashes between the colonists and the soldiers were not infrequent—all of them representing a protest against tyranny.

On April 19, 1775, occurred the "Lexington massacre," when British troops under Major Pitcairn attacked a small body of patriots under Captain

Parker, at Lexington, Massachusetts, killing seven of the "minute-men," so called, and strewing the ground with wounded.

There was at that time no concert between the colonies, each acting independently, but none looking to anything beyond reconciliation and a possible modification of Britain's attitude. Independence for the colonies had not yet been considered, the sole idea of the oppressed colonists being further petitions, compromise, tolerance and a continuance of the colonies under British rule.

Soon after the encounter at Lexington, Paine published, in the *Pennsylvania Magazine* (April, 1775), a summary of Lord Chatham's speech in the British Parliament in which Chatham said the British crown would "not be worth wearing if robbed of so principal a jewel as America." To this Paine added this witty footnote: "The principal jewel of the crown actually dropped out at the coronation." This is doubtless the first hint of independence published in America.

Even George Washington at this time was a loyal British subject, avowing fidelity to the crown and disowning any thought of independence for the colonies. The Rev. Jonathan Boucher in May, 1775, crossing the Potomac in a rowboat, happened in midstream to encounter another boat carrying George

Washington, on his way to Congress. The two men had some conversation about the prospects of the colonies. Washington unequivocally declared himself loyal to the crown, saying to Boucher, "If you ever hear of my joining in any such measures" (measures for separation) "you have my leave to set me down for everything wicked." Two months later, in July, when Washington took command of the army, he (as he subsequently related) "abhorred the idea of independence."

Had the Revolutionary War commenced then and separation from Great Britain resulted, it is likely that another Kingdom would have been created instead of the Republic that Paine devised and that through his efforts was established a year later.

The earliest anticipation of the Declaration of Independence that was written and published in America came from the pen of Paine. This was in his dissertation entitled "A Serious Thought," which appeared in the *Pennsylvania Journal* of October 18, 1775. This essay, condemning "the horrid cruelties exercised by Britain," introduces the idea of independence in these words: "I hesitate not for a moment to believe that the Almighty will finally separate America from Britain. Call it Independence, or what

you will, if it is the cause of God and humanity it will go on."

The conflict having commenced, Paine wished to connect it with humanitarian ideas and republicanism, hoping that in the end both slavery and monarchy would be wiped out of America.

The essay, "A Serious Thought," was but a preface, so to speak, to Paine's remarkable pamphlet "Common Sense," quite as "Common Sense" was but the forerunner to the Declaration of Independence, which it boldly advocated.

CHAPTER IV

"Common Sense" Startles the World

Paine Produces A Pamphlet Masterpiece....Prodigious Consequences....Thousands Converted to Independence, Including Washington....Paine's Hand Seen in The Declaration of Independence....The Formula for the United States of America...Contemporary Tributes to "Common Sense."

PAINE spent the autumn months of 1775 in the writing of "Common Sense," his masterly and well-considered argument for a new and free nation on this side of the Atlantic. It was published—anonymously—by Robert Bell, a Scotchman, on January 10, 1776. The title-page bore the words "Written by an Englishman." The sale of the pamphlet was simply prodigious. Thousands upon thousands of copies were sold; edition after edition poured from the presses. Probably half a million copies were soon in the hands of the people, for within the first three months of its sale more than one hundred and twenty thousand copies were sold. No other pamphlet ever published sold in such great numbers. Although no announcement was made of the fact, Paine gave to the cause of independence all of his financial interest in the pamphlet, thereby depriving himself of quite a large fortune, the price of the pamhlet being two

shillings. Paine paid the publisher a bill of £29 12s 1d for such copies as he obtained for himself and his friends.

Never was a pamphlet written that wrought such wondrous effects as did "Common Sense." To it the American people owe their independence. Within six months of its publication the colonies affirmed their freedom through the drafting and signing of the Declaration of Independence.*

Washington, who only shortly before was protesting his loyalty to Great Britain, carefully read Paine's pamphlet and was at once converted to the cause of independence. Writing to Joseph Reed on January 31st, and referring to the burning of Norfolk, Va., on January 1st, by Lord Dunmore, and Falmouth,

* Several modern authors believe that Thomas Paine was himself the writer of the Declaration and the evidence adduced by Joel Moody, William H. Burr, Van Buren Denslow, and others, is at least plausible. The wording in the Declaration is strikingly similar to that of "Common Sense," as well as is the sequence of argument. Paine, as the author of the stirring pamphlet urging complete independence from Britain, might very logically have been selected to draft the Declaration, but Jefferson, heading the committee appointed to draft the paper, no doubt prepared the historic document.

Paine, never the less, was intimately associated with its preparation. As one of Jefferson's closest friends, and the leading writer on political subjects in America, it is reasonable to suppose that Jefferson, entrusted with the drafting of the Declaration, should turn to Paine for consultation and, perhaps, collaboration.

Maine,—now Portland—ten weeks earlier, by vessels under Admiral Graves, Washington said:

"A few more of such flaming arguments as were exhibited at Falmouth and Norfolk, added to the sound doctrine and unanswerable reasoning contained in the pamphlet 'Common Sense,' will not leave numbers at a loss to decide upon the propriety of separation."

John Quincy Adams said "Paine's pamphlet, 'Common Sense,' crystallized public opinion and was the first factor in bringing about the Revolution."

Both Whigs and Tories read the argument for independence. As the Rev. Theodore Parker said "Every living man in America in 1776 who could read, read 'Common Sense,' by Thomas Paine. If he were a Tory he read it, at least a little, just to find out for himself how atrocious it was; and if he was a

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There can be no doubt that Paine either wrote the anti-slavery clause of the Declaration, or that the writer had before him Paine's essay advocating the abolishment of negro bondage. The anti-slavery clause in the first drafts of the Declaration was omitted eventually because South Carolina and Georgia objected to it, as did also some Northerners who made a business of supplying slaves.

The matter of the authorship of the Declaration will, in all probability, never be absolutely settled. The several drafts of the Declaration, supposed to be the "original" drafts, are in the handwriting of Jefferson. Paine's ideas are visible in all these drafts. Whether he was actually concerned in the writing of the famous document matters little. As William Cobbett truly said: "Whoever wrote the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Paine was its author."

Whig he read it all to find the reasons why he was one. This book was the arsenal to which colonists went for their mental weapons."

Paine raised the conflict between the colonists and the parent-country above the level of an insurrection against taxation to a great human struggle for an ideal.

"Common Sense" not only advocated complete and absolute separation from Britain but pointed out the absurdity of government by kings.

'Monarchy and succession," Paine wrote, "have laid —not this or that kingdom only—but the world in blood and ashes. . . . In England a man has little more to do than to make war and give away places; which, in plain terms, is to impoverish the nation and set it together by the ears. A pretty business, indeed, for a man to be allowed eight hundred thousand sterling a year for, and worshipped into the bargain! Of more worth is one honest man to society, and in the sight of God, than all the crowned ruffians that ever lived."

Paine outlined in "Common Sense" his plan for a representative government, a government of the people, by the people and for the people. The government planned by Paine is what we now know as the modern democratic Republic. Paine deserves all

the credit of inventing the republic, and if the long-suffering peoples of the world owed nothing else to Thomas Paine they are indeed in his debt for planning the present-day Republic.

His plan for the United States of America, the first truly democratic Republic, is very carefully outlined in "Common Sense." The word "republic," it is true, had been used before to designate a form of government, but it had no such significance as we now attach to it. There were so-called "republics" in the Middle Ages but they were merely oligarchies dependent upon the slavery of the masses, and by no means governments which expressed the will of the people. The pseudo-republics of the Middle Ages were close political corporations of the wealthy and so-called "noble" families formed for the distinct purpose of eliminating the people from any representation or voice in the government. "Plato's republic," so-called, was so utterly dissimilar to the modern republic, representing the determinations of the people, that to speak of it as a "republic" is merely to misname its form of government.

The modern Republic, based on the will of the people, is discussed at great length in Paine's later work, "Rights of Man," 1791-2. This was the earliest *complete* statement of republican doctrines. Jeffer-

son, Madison and Jackson, the three Presidents who stood for the republican principle in government, acclaimed these doctrines the fundamental principles of the American Republic.

In discussing the modern democratic Republic in Part II of "Rights of Man," Paine says: "The government of America, which is wholly on the system of representation, is the only *real* Republic in character and in practice that now exists."

Paine was confident that European nations, seeing the success attending the Republican government of the United States, would not long hesitate to overthrow the existing monarchies and establish Republics patterned after that of this country. But, with few exceptions, a period of more than a century and a quarter elapsed after the publication of Paine's "Rights of Man" before Europe awakened to its preposterous support of monarchy, and abruptly overturned some of its thrones, that modern democratic Republics, patterned after the United States, might be set up in their stead.

The mention of the world's new Republics has taken us far from that period when Paine's "Common Sense," advocating independence and the establishment of a Republic, had just come from the presses. We return now to "Common Sense" and 1776.

The authorship of "Common Sense" was attributed to many different persons before it became generally known that Paine was the author. Franklin, among others, was accredited the author of the famous pamphlet. In England a lady reproved him for being the writer of that fine alliterative phrase descriptive of the king, "the Royal British Brute," which occurs in "Common Sense." The sagacious diplomat smiled genially and replied, "Madame, I would never have been so disrespectful to the brute creation as that!"

There were many praiseful notices of "Common Sense" in the newspapers when that pamphlet appeared. One of these journals, the *Constitutional Gazette*, of February 24, 1776, said:

"The pamphlet entitled 'Common Sense' is indeed a wonderful production. It is completely calculated for the meridian of North America. The author introduces a new system of politics as widely different from the old as the Copernican system is from the Ptolemaic. The blood wantonly spilt by the British troops at Lexington gave birth to this extraordinary performance, which contains as surprising a discovery in politics as the works of Sir Isaac Newton do in philosophy. This animated piece dispels with irresistible energy the prejudice of the mind against the doctrine of independence, and pours in upon it such an inundation of light and truth as will produce an instantaneous and marvellous change in the temper, in the views and feelings of an American. The ineffable

delight with which it is perused and its doctrines imbibed is a demonstration that the seeds of independence, though imported with the troops from Britain, will grow surprisingly with proper cultivation in the fields of America. The mind indeed exults at the thought of a final separation from Great Britain, whilst all its prejudices and enchanting prospects in favor of a reconciliation, like the morning cloud, are chased away by the heat and influence of this rising luminary, and although the ties of affection and other considerations have formerly bound this country in a three-fold cord to Great Britain, yet the connection will be dissolved and the Gordian knot be cut. 'For the blood of the slain the voice of weeping nature cries *It is time to part.*' "

Other journals of that period spoke quite as praisefully of "Common Sense." *Almon's Remembrancer* (1776) said:

" 'Common Sense' is read by all ranks, and as many as read, so many become converted. . . . 'Common Sense' has converted thousands to Independence who could not endure the idea before."

The *Pennsylvania Evening Post* of March 17, 1776, said:

" 'Common Sense' hath made independents of the majority of the country."

Washington, a few years later, in a letter to James Madison (June 12, 1784) urges that some action be taken to reward Paine for his services, and says in part:

"Must the merits and services of 'Common Sense' continue to glide down the stream of time unrewarded by this country? His writings certainly have had a powerful effect on the public mind,—ought they not then to meet an adequate return?"

A letter from George Washington to Joseph Reed, written shortly after Paine's pamphlet was published, contains this paragraph about "Common Sense":

"By private letters which I have lately received from Virginia, I find that 'Common Sense' is working a powerful change there in the minds of many men."

John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, James Monroe, Edmund Randolph—all the leading figures of the American Revolutionary period—wrote praisefully of Paine's "Common Sense."

CHAPTER V

"The American Crisis"

Paine Enlists in the "Flying Camp"....Re-Enlists Under General Greene....Appointed Aide-de-camp....Electrifies Dispirited Troops With First Number of "The Crisis"....Winning the Battle of Trenton...."Crisis II"....Paine Appointed Secretary to Indian Commission....Elected Secretary to Congressional Committee on Foreign Affairs...."Crisis III"....A Letter to Richard Henry Lee About Burgoyne's Surrender.

BELIEVING, as Paine did, that "Those who expect to reap the blessings of freedom, must, like men, undergo the fatigues of supporting it," * Paine volunteered for service in the patriot army. He joined a Pennsylvania division of the Flying Camp, a body of ten thousand men, under General Roberdeau, enlisted to serve wherever needed. His first service, musket on shoulder, was at Perth Amboy, New Jersey, and later at Bergen. When the enlistment expired, Paine trudged to Fort Lee, on the Jersey shore of the Hudson River, to renew his enlistment under General Nathaniel Greene, who was in command at Fort Lee. General Greene on September 19, 1776, appointed Paine his aide-de-camp. Two months later Fort Lee, and Fort Washington, on the New York

* The introductory sentence of "Crisis IV."

shore, were taken by the British. Washington and his men retreated to the Delaware; General Greene with his small garrison, including Paine, reached Newark, New Jersey, where Paine, by the light of a camp-fire, wrote, on a drum-head, the first of his series of little pamphlets called "The American Crisis." This first brochure was written for the purpose of renewing courage in the soldiers of the patriot army, who, poorly-clad in winter, ill-nourished, and suffering many privations, were profoundly disheartened. "Crisis I," commencing with the famous sentence "These are the times that try men's souls" was, by Washington's order, read at the head of every regiment, and it produced exactly the effect which its author designed. The men were greatly cheered and hopeful, and heartened for the assault which Washington had determined to make upon Trenton.

"Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph; what we obtain too cheap we esteem too lightly; 'tis dearness only that gives everything its value. Heaven knows how to put a proper price upon its goods; and it would be strange indeed if so celestial an article as Freedom should not be highly rated."

The watchword at Trenton was "These are the times that try men's souls," and the men entered the

conflict with Paine's words on their lips." There is no doubt whatever that "Crisis I" won the Battle of Trenton.

Paine was "with General Greene during the whole of the black times of that trying campaign." * He participated in the capture of the Hessians at Trenton and in the affair at Princeton. Paine was also under fire at Fort Mifflin. The story of Washington's retreat across the Delaware is told in Paine's account of it (Vol. III, p. 257) and in his letter to Franklin, in Paris (Vol. III, p. 263).

The victory of the patriot army over the Hessians at Trenton was a matter of momentous significance to the cause of Independence, while a defeat would have been disastrous in its consequences. Paine did not allow his elation to delay another number of the "Crisis." Four weeks after the Battle of Trenton Paine published "Crisis II," addressed "To Lord Howe." In it he warns the British commander that if the present opportunity of making peace is neglected it may afterwards be too late. He taunts the titled Briton with having lately turned author, referring to his Proclamation which offered the Americans "mercy" on condition of laying down their arms. In the course of his address to Howe Paine

* Quotation from a letter of Paine, August, 1807.

says " 'The UNITED STATES OF AMERICA' will sound as pompously in the world or in history as 'the Kingdom of Great Britain.' "

On January 21, 1777, Paine was appointed by the Council of Safety in Philadelphia secretary to a commission sent by Congress to make a treaty with the Indians in Pennsylvania. The commissioners, with one thousand dollars worth of presents, met the Indian chiefs in the German Reformed Church at Easton, Pennsylvania. The report to Congress states that "after shaking hands and drinking rum, while the organ played, we proceeded to business."

Paine, no doubt, wrote the report of the commissioners. The Pennsylvania Assembly paid him £300 for his work in this matter, an amount which was later refunded to the State by Congress.

The following interesting anecdote about the meeting with the Indians was related by Paine in a public letter in 1807:

"The chief of the tribes, who went by the name of King *Last-night*, because his tribe had sold their lands, had seen some English men-of-war in some of the waters of Canada, and was impressed with the power of those great canoes; but he saw that the English made no progress against us by land. This was enough for an Indian to form an opinion by. He could speak some English, and in conversation

with me, alluding to the great canoes, he gave me his idea of the power of a king of England, by the following metaphor 'The king of England,' said he, 'is like a fish. When he is in the water he can wag his tail; when he comes on land he lays down on his side.' Now if the English Government had but half the sense this Indian had, they would not have sent Duckworth to Constantinople, and Douglas to Norfolk, to lie down on their side."

Congress on April 17 elected Paine secretary of the Committee of Foreign Affairs. Two days later, on the second anniversary of the clash at Lexington, "Crisis III" was published in Philadelphia. Paine, as secretary, was careful to keep informed the young nation's representatives abroad, sending them newspapers and letters which would advise them of the state of affairs at home. The following letter to William Bingham, who was the agent of Congress at Martinique, is an example of Paine's attention to representatives abroad:

"PHILADELPHIA, July 16, 1777.—SIR,—A very sudden opportunity offers of sending you the news-papers, from which you will collect the situation of our Affairs. The enemy finding their attempt of marching thro' the Jersies to this city impracticable, have retreated to Staten Island seemingly discontented and dispirited and quite at a loss what step next to pursue. Our army is now well recruited and formidable. Our militia in the several States ready at a day's notice to turn out and support the army when

occasion requires; and tho' we cannot, in the course of a campaign, expect everything in the several parts of the continent to go just as we wish it; yet the general face of our affairs assures us of final success.

"In the papers of June 18th & 25 and July 2d you will find Genl. Washington and Arnold's letters of the enemy's movement in, and retreat from the Jersies. We are under some apprehensions for Ticonderoga, as we find the enemy are unexpectedly come into that quarter. The Congress have several times had it in contemplation to remove the garrison from that place—as by experience we find that men shut up in forts are not of so much use as in the field, especially in the highlands, where every hill is a natural fortification.

"I am, Sir,

"Your obt. humble servant,

"THOMAS PAINE.

"Sec'y to the Committee of Foreign Affairs."

That Paine made it his business also to send information to other officials in the government service, who should be kept informed of the situation of affairs, is evidenced by this letter to Hon. Richard Henry Lee, dated "Headquarters, fourteen miles from Philadelphia," Oct. 30, 1777:

"I wrote you last Tuesday 21st inst., including a copy of the King's speech, since which nothing material has happened at camp. Genl. McDougal was sent last Wednesday night 22d to attack a party of the enemy who lay over the Schuylkill at Grey's Ferry where they have a bridge.

Genls. Greene and Sullivan went down to make a diversion below Germantown at the same time. I was with this last party, but as the enemy withdrew their detachment we had only our labor for our pains.

"No particulars of the Northern affair have yet come to head qrs., the want of which has caused much speculation. A copy, said to be the Articles of Capitulation was received 3 or 4 days ago, but they rather appear to be some proposals made by Burgoyne, than the capitulation itself. By those articles it appears to me that Burgoyne has capitulated upon terms which we have a right to doubt the full performance of, viz., 'That the officers and men shall be transported to England and not serve in or against North America during the present war'—or words to this effect.

"I remark, that this capitulation, if true, has the air of a national treaty; it is binding, not only on Burgoyne as a *general,* but on England as a *nation;* because the troops are to be subject to the conditions of the treaty after they return to England and are out of his command. It regards England and America as separate sovereign States, and puts them on an equal footing by staking the faith and honor of the former for the performance of a contract entered into with the latter.

"What in the capitulation is styled the *'Present War'* England affects to call a *'Rebellion'* and while she holds this idea and denies any knowledge of America as a separate sovereign power, she will not conceive herself bound by any capitulation or treaty entered into by her generals which is to bind her as a *nation,* and more especially in those cases where both pride and present advan-

tage tempt her to violation. She will deny Burgoyne's right and authority for making such a treaty, and will, very possibly, show her insult by first censuring him for entering into it, and then immediately sending the troops back.

"I think we ought to be exceedingly cautious how we trust her with the power of abusing our credulity. We have no authority for believing she will perform that part of the contract which subjects her not to send the troops to America during the war. The insolent answer given to the Commissrs. by Ld. Stormont, *'that the King's Ambassadors recd. no letters from rebels but when they came to crave mercy,'* sufficiently instructs us not to entrust them with the power of insulting treaties of capitulation.

"Query, whether it wd. not be proper to detain the troops at Boston & direct the Commissioners at Paris to present the Treaty of Capitulation to the English Court thro' the hands of Ld. Stormont, to know whether it be the intention of that court to abide strictly by the conditions and obligations thereof, and if no assurance be obtained to keep the troops until they can be exchanged here.

"Tho' we have no immediate knowledge of any alliance formed by our Commissioners with France or Spain, yet we have no assurance there is not, and our immediate release of those prisoners, by sending them to England, may operate to the injury of such Allied Powers, and be perhaps directly contrary to some contract subsisting between us and them prior to the capitulation. I think we ought to know this first.—Query, ought we not (knowing the infidelity they have already acted) to suspect they will evade the Treaty by putting back into New York under

pretence of distress.—I would not trust them an inch farther than I could see them in the present state of things.

"The army was to have marched yesterday about 2 or 3 miles but the weather has been so exceedingly bad for three days past as to prevent any kind of movement, the waters are so much out and the rivulets so high there is no passing from one part of ye camp to another.

"I wish the Northern Army was down here. I am apt to think that nothing materially offensive will take place on our part at present. Some means must be taken to fill up the Army this winter. I look upon the recruiting service at an end and that some other plan must be adopted. Suppose the service be by draft—and that those who are not drawn should contribute a dollar or two dollars a man to him on whom the lot falls,—something of this kind would proportion the burden, and those who are drawn would have something either to encourage them to go, or to provide a substitute with—After closing this letter I shall go again to Fort Mifflin; all was safe there on the 27th, but from some preparations of the enemy they expect another attack somewhere.

"The enclosed return of provision and stores is taken from an account signed by Burgoyne and sent to Ld. George Germain. I have not time to copy the whole. Burgoyne closes his letter as follows, 'By a written account found in the Commissary's House at Ticonderoga six thousand odd hundred persons were fed from the magazine the day before the evacuation.'

"I am dear sir, Your affectionate honorable servant,

"T. PAINE.

"Respectful compliments to friends.

"If the Congress has the capitulation and particulars of the surrender, they do an exceedingly wrong thing by not publishing them because they subject the whole affair to suspicion."

CHAPTER VI

Dark Days of the Revolution

Lord Howe in Philadelphia....Congress Retreats to York, Pennsylvania....Washington's Army at Valley Forge.... "Crisis V"....Struggles With Counterfeit Continental Money....A Letter to Washington....French Fleet Blockades the Deleware....Lord Howe Evacuates Philadelphia.... "Crisis VI"....A Frenchman's Estimate of American Public Feeling.

IT IS greatly to be regretted that Paine's suggestion regarding Burgoyne's capitulation was not followed immediately. In a brief space of time the British general was permitted to go to England, while his troops were retained as prisoners here for five years—until the treaty of peace was made. General Howe took Philadelphia, and, with his troops, was in possession of it from Sept. 26, 1777.

Congress retreated to York, Pennsylvania, and Washington's army of 5000 men were suffering the rigors of an exceptionally severe winter at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania. Paine wrote "Crisis V," addressed to General Howe, at Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and it was printed in York, Pennsylvania. The opening words of this "Crisis" are these:

"To argue with a man who has renounced the use and authority of reason, and whose philosophy con-

sists in holding humanity in contempt, is like administering medicine to the dead," and the closing words are "I am, sir, with every wish for an honorable peace,

Your friend, enemy, and countryman,
COMMON SENSE."

The old Cookis house at York to which Paine carried his valuable chest containing the papers of Congress, and where, no doubt, Paine edited his manuscript of "Crisis V" before turning it over to the printer, is still standing, and is, at this writing (1925), occupied by negroes, who probably have never heard of the great man who so ardently wrote in behalf of their race (see "African Slavery in America" and "A Serious Thought," Vol. II). This historic old house stands on the bank of Cadorus creek, at the rear of what is now number 470 Cadorus Street. An oblong stone under the eaves, now greatly time- and weather-worn, records the fact that the house was "built by J. B. Cookis in the year 1761." It is said to be the oldest house in York county.

The trunk Paine took to this house was the same chest with which he had previously hurried off to Trenton when Howe took possession of Philadelphia. The meetings of Congress in York were held in a building which no longer exists in a more central part

of York. The chest of papers was kept in the Cookis house because more remote, in case of sudden attack.

Paine was again in Lancaster in April and from there, April 11, wrote this interesting letter to his friend, Henry Laurens, President of Congress:

"LANCASTER, April 11, 1778. Sir,—I take the liberty of mentioning an affair to you which I think deserves the attention of Congress. The persons who came from Philadelphia some time ago with, or in company with, a flag from the enemy, and were taken up and committed to Lancaster jail for attempting to put off counterfeit Contl. money, were yesterday brought to trial and are likely to escape by means of an artful and partial construction of an Act of this State for punishing such offences. The Act makes it felony to counterfeit the money *emitted* by Congress, or to circulate such counterfeits knowing them to be so. The offenders' counsel explained the word 'emitted' to have only a retrospect meaning by supplying the idea of '*which have been*' 'emitted by Congress.' Therefore say they the Act cannot be applied to any money emitted after the date of the Act. I believe the words 'emitted by Congress' means only, and should be understood, to distinguish Continental money from other money, and not one time from another time. It has, as I conceive, no reference to any particular time, but only to the particular authority which distinguishes money so emitted from money emitted by the state. It is meant only as a description of the money, and not of the time of striking it, but includes the idea of all time as inseparable from the con-

tinuance of the authority of Congress. But be this as it may; the offence is Continental and the consequences of the same extent. I can have no idea of any particular State pardoning an offence against all, or even their letting an offender slip *legally* who is accountable to all and every State alike for his crime. The place where he commits it is the least circumstance of it. It is a mere accident and has nothing or very little to do with the crime itself. I write this hoping the information will point out the necessity of the Congress supporting their emissions by claiming every offender in this line where the present deficiency of the law or the partial interpretation of it operates to the injustice and injury of the whole continent.

"I beg leave to trouble you with another hint. Congress I learn has something to propose thro' the Commissioners on the cartel respecting the admission and stability of the Continental currency. As forgery is a sin against all men alike, and reprobated by all civil nations, query, would it not be right to require of General Howe the persons of Smithers and others in Philadelphia suspected of this crime; and if he, or any other commander, continues to conceal or protect them in such practices, that, in such case, the Congress will consider the crime as the act of the commander-in-chief. Howe affects not to know the Congress—he ought to be made to know them; and the apprehension of personal consequences may have some effect on his conduct. I am, dear sir,

"Your obt. and humble servt.,

"T. PAINE.

"Since writing the foreging the prisoners have had their trial; the one is acquitted and the other convicted only of a fraud; for as the law now stands, or rather as it is explained, the counterfeiting—or circulating counterfeits—is only a fraud. I do not believe it was the intention of the Act to make it so, and I think it misapplied lenity in the Court to suffer such an explanation, because it has a tendency to invite and encourage a species of treason, the most prejudicial to us of any or all the other kinds. I am aware how very difficult it is to make a law so very perfect at first as not to be subject to false or perplexed conclusions. There never was but one Act (said a Member of the House of Commons) which a man might not creep out of, *i.e.* the Act which obliges a man to be buried in woollen.

"T. P." *

From York, Pennsylvania, on May 16, 1778, Paine wrote a letter to Franklin in Paris, informing the diplomat of events that had transpired during his absence. This lengthy letter Paine wrote both in his capacity as Secretary of Foreign Affairs and as Franklin's personal friend. The letter is of great historical importance, and is given in full in Vol. III, p. 263. The letter was written at the old Cookis

* The original of this letter, in a fine state of preservation, three pages, with the address on the back, and the notation of Henry Laurens that the letter was received at York on April 13, is now in the collection of Albert M. Todd, of Kalamazoo, Michigan, a member of the Thomas Paine National Historical Association. It had previously been in the Gratz and in the Gable collections.

house where Paine wrote "Crisis V," and where he also wrote the beginning of "Crisis VI."

Paine wrote to Washington also from York. His letter is addressed to the American Commander-in-Chief at Valley Forge, and reads as follows:

"York Town, June 5, 1778.—Sir,—As a general opinion prevails that the enemy will quit Philadelphia, I take the liberty of transmitting you my reasons why it is probable they will not. In your difficult and distinguished situation every hint may be useful.

"I put the immediate case of their evacuation, to be a declaration of war in Europe made by them or against them: in which case, their army would be wanted for other service, and likewise because their present situation would be too unsafe, being subject to be blocked up by France and attacked by you and her jointly.

"Britain will avoid a war with France if she can; which according to my arrangement of politics she may easily do—she must see the necessity of acknowledging, sometime or other, the independence of America; if she is wise enough to make that acknowledgment *now*, she of consequence admits the right of France to the quiet enjoyment of her treaty, and therefore no war can take place upon the ground of having concluded a treaty with revolted British subjects.

"This being admitted, their apprehension of being doubly attacked, or of being wanted elsewhere, cease of consequence; and they will then endeavor to hold all they can, that they may have something to restore, in lieu of

something else which they will demand; as I know of no instance where conquered places were surrendered up prior to, but only in consequence of a treaty of peace.

"You will observe, sir, that my reasoning is founded on the supposition of their being reasonable beings, which if they are not, then they are not within the compass of my system. I am, sir, with every wish for your happiness, Your affectionate and obt. humble servant,

"THOS. PAINE.

"His Excellency GENL. WASHINGTON, Valley Forge."

A few days after Washington received this letter news came that a French fleet in command of Count d'Estaing had made its appearance on the coast, and was planning to blockade the Delaware. The British had evacuated Philadelphia, manifestly in haste and in panic. News spread rapidly of the apparent alarm and the precipitate flight of British troops. Congress returned to Philadelphia, and Paine at once commenced writing his sixth "Crisis," addressed to the peace commissioners sent to America by Britain. This "Crisis" is dated Oct. 20, 1778. (Vol. III, p. 47.)

Despite the departure of the British troops from Philadelphia, and the return of Congress, a surprisingly large number of the people in that city were Tories. A letter of Conrad Alexandre Gérard, Minister from France, to his government, dated November 24, 1778, says that "scarcely one quarter of the ordi-

nary inhabitants of Philadelphia now here favor the cause (of independence). Commercial and family ties, together with an aversion to popular government, seem to account for this. The same feeling exists in New York and Boston, which is not the case in the rural districts." Two months earlier Gérard had written to his government from Philadelphia (September 18,) regarding aid given to the British by Quakers. Gérard, in his letter, said that "During the occupation of Philadelphia by the British, proofs were obtained of the services rendered them by the Quakers; some of these were caught acting as spies, etc."

CHAPTER VII

The Silas Deane Affair

Deane as Financial Commissioner to France Exceeds His Instructions....His Defense....He Returns to America....Paine Publishes His Suspicions of Deane....The French Minister Denounces Paine....Congress Refuses to Discharge Him.

THE "Silas Deane affair," which is here related in some detail, is the story of a member of the first Continental Congress, 1774, sent to France in June, 1776, as a political and financial agent of this country, to ascertain the feeling and attitude of the French government regarding the American rupture with Britain and to obtain if possible military supplies. It is the story of an unpleasant episode in American history of the Revolutionary War period. Thomas Paine, ever alert in guarding the interests of the United States, figures in it as the exposer of a plot to mulct the nation's slender treasury.

In September Franklin and Arthur Lee were commissioned to join Deane in Paris, and assist in negotiating a treaty with France. In consequence of the extravagant contracts which Deane had entered into, without authority in his instructions, he was recalled Nov. 21, 1777, and John Adams was appointed in his place. Silas Deane before leaving

Paris wrote the following letter (December 20, 1777,) regarding Arthur Lee, Franklin, etc., and including a copy of his letter to Congress. It is supposed to have been sent to either Robert Morris or Benjamin Harrison. It has not been published heretofore:

"You will, I doubt not, before the receipt of this have had many representations made you. I am not wholly unacquainted with the nature or complexion, and could, were it necessary, give you such details of certain gentlemen here as would at once raise your indignation, contempt and laughter, but I have never wrote one word concerning either of them until this moment. I will not add, I wait only to know what these accusations are, and of what nature, that I may answer in a distinct and becoming manner. They have declared they will complain, and though I have never taken a single step but by the advice of Doctor Franklin, and have ever had his approbation, yet I greatly fear this will not appear at once to contradict the first impression made by these artful and designing men in their representations.

"Thus situated, I apply to you as my friend and as a friend to justice, that the truth may be inquired for at the mouth of Doctor Franklin, or that all judgment may be suspended until I can have an opportunity of answering in person."—He then quotes his letter to Congress, which reads:

"I am ignorant of what kind of complaint the two brothers here will prefer against me. I know they are

implacable and indefatigable. Whatever their complaints may be, I pray I may not be condemned unheard. I cannot live with these men, or do business with them, nor can I find the man in the world who can. These characters cannot be unknown to you, in some degree. Permit me once more to refer you, and the Honorable Congress, to Doctor Franklin who knows me, and who, to his sorrow, and vexation, knows them. This confidence I have the honor of enjoying at Court is the unhappy ground of our difficulties, for the Minister has the most distrustful opinion of A. L. Esq., [Arthur Lee,] nor will he see him but when obliged to do it; this opinion is of very long standing and has been confirmed by him since his being in France, by his conduct.

"Not a day passes but he ridicules and curses the whole French nation in a body before his servants; every servant is a spy of the Ministry and faithfully reports all he hears to a proper officer. The servants are registered and when they go into service, or change their masters, they acquaint the proper officer with it, so that the police know by this means everything which passes.

"I have expostulated with him formerly on this subject but to no purpose, his naturally jealous suspicions make, with a certain litigious littleness which seems natural to him, increases every day, until he has really become disagreeable to all who know him, and is avoided as much as decency and politeness will permit. In this situation his spleen is perhaps levelled as much against Doctor Franklin as myself. But as I have been the acting person and the one most applied to in the business, I am first levelled at. Permit me, my dear sir, to give you candidly my

opinion on having Ambassadors, Agents or Commissioners at foreign Courts. As soon as our independence is confirmed and peace is established, I would advise you to have none in any part of the world.

"Consuls in the ports are all that will be wanted, and they will cost little or nothing. I would wish America to have as little connection as possible with Europe, except what arises from commerce and the exchanging of mutual good offices. At any rate never appoint more than one man at one Court, nor send one man at the same time to two. These are my real sentiments on the subject. I have ambition of being continued in office myself. The time I have spent in France has been the most laborious and fatiguing of any period of my life, and I have seen enough of Courts to wish to be as far from them as possible, notwithstanding the reception I have ever met with, and the particular confidence I am now honored with is flattering.

"You see, sir, with what freedom I throw out my undisguised sentiments on paper. I wish them to go on further than the private circle of your friends. Conscious of the rectitude of my intentions, and of the disinterestedness of my conduct, ever since I have had the honor of serving the public, I am confident that whatever temporary prejudices may prevail, truth must at last appear, and I wish nothing else. I find in a paper published the 19th of August at Philadelphia that a gentleman whom I employed as a secretary, and who must certainly had much of my friendship and confidence, has assumed to himself the merit of everything that has been done in Europe, and talks of contracts for cannon, etc., made before I ever saw him, and of the disposition of this Court, of which his

whole knowledge must have been second-hand at best. I only wish that men, who are so fond of appropriating to themselves the merit of which they think I have performed well, would as readily take on them whatever censure I may be exposed to, for having, in order to interest some great and capital families in our cause, exceeded the letter of instructions in my agreements with them.

"I am sensible that I am thereby exposed, and all I ask is that the Honorable Congress would suspend their judgment until acquainted with every circumstance with which I was then surrounded. I have kept back nothing, nor will I keep back anything from Doctor Franklin; and as I may be supposed a prejudiced person, I submit it to his stating the case, and will contentedly abide the consequences, sufficiently happy in the consciousness of the rectitude of my views and in finding them thus far accomplished.

"SILAS DEANE." *

Deane, returning to America, left Paris, April 1, 1778. Upon his arrival Congress asked for an accounting before that body of his proceedings abroad, but Deane evaded a full disclosure.

Having good reasons for believing that Deane was involved in attempting a fraud on the meagre funds of the struggling young nation, Paine published an article telling what he knew. It stirred up a hornet's nest. The French Minister in America was fright-

* Like other human beings, Arthur Lee had his faults, but disloyalty to the cause of American Independence was not one of them.

ened by Paine's disclosure, and a large party in Congress assumed a distinctly hostile attitude to Paine, whereupon the author resigned the secretaryship of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

It has been frequently alleged that Paine was false to his oath of office, but the assertion is absolutely untrue, as we may see by reading the official oath, which was drafted especially for the first secretary of the new committee, and purposely so worded as to give him great freedom as a writer for the newspapers. It imposes secrecy upon him only in matters which Congress directed him to keep secret. Congress did not know the facts revealed by Paine in the Deane affair until they were published, and could not, therefore, impose secrecy about them. The oath was:

"That the said secretary, previous to his entering on his office, take an oath, to be administered by the president, well and faithfully to execute the trust reposed in him, according to his best skill and judgment; and to disclose no matter the knowledge of which shall be acquired in consequence of his office, *that he shall be directed to keep secret.*"

In consequence of the complaint of the French Minister, Congress was forced to disown what Paine had published, but it refused to vote that it was an abuse of office and it would not discharge the secretary.

CHAPTER VIII

The History of the Deane Affair

Suggestions of French Assistance in 1775....Beaumarchais Talks to the King....France's Quarrel With England.... Vergennes in the Plot....Negotiations by Arthur Lee for a Gift....French Demands for Payments....Deane Fails to Convince Congress....Paine's "Indiscretion"....Paine Resigns to Save Congress from Embarrassment.

THE Paine-Deane matter has been so little understood by many writers, and this involved chapter in the history of the American Revolution has been so greatly misrepresented by others, that a rather extended review is necessary to set the matter clearly before readers of today.

In May, 1775, Debourg made the first suggestion of French assistance to America, and the project was brought to the King's attention by Caron de Beaumarchais, the famous French dramatist and speculator. One month before the arrival of Deane in Paris, and six months before Franklin arrived there, the plan to give a million livres to aid America had been approved and part of the amount turned over (June 10, 1776) to Beaumarchais for the patriot cause. Deane made the mistake of trying to take credit for this million, bringing within the scope of

his negotiations money that was paid before he arrived in France. And Beaumarchais made the mistake of deceiving Deane about the million. The double deception brought about the ruin of both.

France had much reason to be aggrieved with England at the time America's revolt against British tyranny commenced. She had suffered not only loss of territory through British aggressions but had been sorely humiliated. The revolt of Britain's colonies in America gave France an opportunity to avenge her wrongs and she did not long hesitate. The king himself was not greatly interested in the plan, but the Count de Vergennes, Minister of Foreign Affairs, won him to the project. Encouraged by Vergennes, Beaumarchais had a talk about the project with Arthur Lee, who was the secret agent of Congress in London, and plans were made for the writing by Beaumarchais of a series of letters to Louis XVI, the king; these letters to pass through the hands of Vergennes and be revised by him.

The hand of the clever dramatist is plainly to be seen in the letters. He pictures the French driven out of America and India, and depicts America now advancing to engage the subjugator of France, and requiring only a little help to make England helpless beside her European foes, France and Spain.

Beaumarchais being apprised by Vergennes that Louis XVI would not disregard France's treaty with Britain, evolved a plan whereby France could secretly aid America. He proposed to the king that assistance could be given as if by a commercial house, without the government's knowledge. In his communication making this proposition to the king he says that Louis' "succor" is not to end the war in America, but "to continue and feed it to the great damage of the English"; that "to sacrifice a million to put England to the expense of a hundred millions, is exactly the same as if you advance a million to gain ninety-nine." One-half of the million livres is to be sent to America in gold and one-half in gunpowder. And the aid was to be far from gratuitous, for Beaumarchais continues in his proposition that the powder can be taken from French magazines at "four to six sols per pound," and sent to America "on the basis of twenty sols per pound." He proceeds: "The constant view of the affair in which the mass of Congress ought to be kept is the certainty that your Majesty is not willing to enter in any way into the affair, but that a company is very generously about to turn over a certain sum to the prudent management of a faithful agent to give successive aid to the Americans by the shortest and surest means of return in tobacco."

This letter from Beaumarchais, without doubt the most important document in the case, was suppressed until the year 1878, and its existence was unknown to any of the writers who have discussed this question, with the exception of Durand and Stillé, the latter being alone in recognizing the bearing of this document on the question of Beaumarchais' good faith.

It is not known how much of Beaumarchais' scheme actually came before the king, and received his approval. He was still undecided about the proposition when another appeal was made to him (February 29, 1776) embodying one from Arthur Lee. Lee said: "We offer to France, in return for her secret assistance, a secret treaty of commerce, by which she will secure for a certain number of years after peace is declared all the advantages with which we have enriched England for the past century, with, additionally, a guarantee of her possessions according to our forces." Lee, in his proposal, says nothing about other payments. Marie Antoinette, the Queen, now became interested in the brave Americans, and perhaps contributed in winning the King over to the scheme in April.

Vergennes, on May 2, 1776, submitted to the King for his signature the order for one million livres; also he had a letter, to be written in the hand of the

Minister's fifteen-year-old son, to Beaumarchais, who, he says, will employ M. Montandoin, whose real name was Montieu, to forward to the Americans "such funds as your Majesty chooses to appropriate for their benefit." It is likely that Louis acceded for motives of state policy, rather than for any financial advantages such as "sols" and tobacco.

On June 10 the million was turned over, and two days later Beaumarchais wrote to Arthur Lee in London, saying: "The difficulties I have found in my negotiations with the Minister have *determined me to form a company*, which will enable the munitions and powder to be transmitted sooner to *your friend* on condition of his returning tobacco to Cape Francis." Lee was to report the transaction to the Secret Committee of Congress, calling attention to the generosity of the affair. Tobacco was to be sent, it is true, but this was chiefly to give the impression of a commercial transaction, and hide the King. Congress, of course, little suspected that it might be called upon to pay twenty sols a pound for gunpowder that had cost only four to six. Lee sent a special messenger to America to report the news of France's aid and "magnanimity" to Congress.

Silas Deane had his first interview with Beaumarchais July 17, 1776. He met the shrewd specu-

lator by the advice of Vergennes. Beaumarchais had known nothing of Congress sending an agent to Paris empowered to purchase munitions. Had he been aware of it, he would, of course, have had no dealings with Lee. He could now only repudiate him, and prevail upon Deane to disregard him. Arthur Lee told Deane that Beaumarchais said he had received two hundred thousand pounds sterling from the French government for the use of the American Congress, but Beaumarchais "constantly and positively denied having said any such thing," and Deane believed Beaumarchais, which was a mistake. Beaumarchais had actually received the amount named by Lee. The French government, eager for treaty concessions from America, assured the American commissioners that the million was a royal gift. The source of the gift was to be kept a secret.

The commissioners wrote a letter to Congress in October, 1777, which, being intercepted, was received only in duplicate, March, 1778. This letter assured Congress that "no repayment will ever be required from us for what has already been given us either in money or military stores." Silas Deane was one of these commissioners, the others being Franklin and Arthur Lee. In the meantime, however, Beaumarchais had put in a claim to Congress, through an

agent, De Francy, whom he had sent to America for the purpose, for payment of his bill. His claim included the million which Beaumarchais' government had flatly avowed to be a gift.

It was the receipt of Beaumarchais' claim that brought about the recall by Congress of Deane for explanations. Deane reached America in July, 1778. He asserted that he had left his papers in Paris, and that he had borrowed money of Beaumarchais for his personal expenses. He said that his despatch signed in October, telling Congress that the million was a gift, had been intercepted, and abstracted from the packet of papers sent; all of the other papers in the package having been duly received by Congress. His story and the explanations seemed suspicious.

The following statement in Paine's handwriting was prepared for submission to Congress, and it is likely that it was read during a secret discussion of the subject. The paper is headed "Extraordinary Circumstances."

"1st. The lost despatches are dated Oct. 6th and Oct. 7th. They were sent by a private hand—that is, they were not sent by the post. Capt. Folger had charge of them. They were all under one cover containing five separate packets; three of the packets were on commercial matters only—one of these was to Mr. R[obert] Morris, Chairman

of the Commercial Committee, one to Mr. Hancock (private concerns), another to Barnaby Deane, S. Deane's brother. Of the other two packets, one of them was to the Secret Committee, then styled the Committee for Foreign Affairs, the other was to Richard H. Lee—these two last packets had nothing in them but blank white French paper.

"2d. In September preceding the date of the despatches Mr. B[eaumarchais] sent Mr. Francis [De Francy] to Congress to press payment to the amount mentioned in the official letter of Oct. 6. Mr. F[rancy] brought a letter signed only by S. Deane—the capt. of the vessel (Landais) brought another letter from Deane; both of these letters were to enforce Mr. B[eaumarchais'] demand. Mr. F[rancy] arrived with his letters and demand. The official despatches (if I may so say) arrived blank. Congress therefore had no authoritative information to act by. About this time Mr. D[eane] was recalled and arrived in America in Count D'Estaing's fleet. He gave out that he had left his accounts in France.

"With the Treaty of Alliance came over the duplicates of the lost despatches. They came into my office not having been seen by Congress; and as they contain an injunction not to be conceded by [to?] Congress, I kept them secret in the office because at that time the Foreign Committee was dispersed and new members not appointed.

"On the 5th of Dec. 1778, Mr. D[eane] published an inflammatory piece against Congress. As I saw it had an exceeding ill effect out of doors I made some remarks upon it—with a view of preventing people running mad. This piece was replied to by a piece under the signature of 'Plain Truth'—in which it was stated, that Mr. D[eane]

though a stranger in France and to the language, and without money, had by himself procured 30,000 stand of arms, 30,000 suits of clothing, and more than 200 pieces of brass cannon. I replied that these supplies were in a train of execution before he was sent to France, that Mr. Deane's private letters and his official despatches jointly with the other two Commissioners contradicted each other.

"At this time I found Deane had made a large party in Congress—and that a motion had been made but not decided upon for dismissing me from the Foreign Office, with a kind of censure."

Deane appeared before Congress on August 9 and 21. He did not impress that body favorably, however, and a third hearing was refused him. He was visibly angered. In his irritation he turned to the press, addressing an article "To the free and virtuous citizens of America," December 5, 1778. Paine replied to Deane's screed in the *Pennsylvania Packet* of December 15.

The reader is referred to Vol. III, p. 281, for Paine's letter to Silas Deane, and is recommended also to read the succeeding article in the same volume, "To the Public on Mr. Deane's Affair." Regarding the first article Paine wrote the following letter to the Hon. Henry Laurens, explaining his motives for publishing it:

"Philadelphia, December 15, 1778. Dear Sir: In this morning's paper is a piece addressed to Mr. Deane, in which your name is mentioned. My intention in relating the circumstances with which it is connected is to prevent the enemy drawing any unjust conclusions from an accidental division in the House on matters no ways political. You will please to observe that I have been exceedingly careful to preserve the honor of Congress in the minds of the people who have been so exceedingly fretted by Mr. Deane's address—and this will appear the more necessary when I inform you that a proposal has been made for calling a Town Meeting to demand justice for Mr. Deane. I have been applied to smoothly and roughly not to publish this piece. Mr. Deane has likewise been with the printer. I am, &c."

The cause of independence was a matter so near and dear to Paine's heart, having himself given everything he possessed to the cause, that it seemed to him only natural that France and her ruler should assist in our struggle with purely unselfish motives.

Paine was convinced that Deane had no right to credit for obtaining the French subsidies. Henry Laurens had resigned as President of Congress and the new President, John Jay, was in the forefront of the Deane adherents. So Paine knew that he had to battle if he was to defeat what he was satis-

fied was an attempt to defraud the country. And he was prepared for a conflict. In the *Pennsylvania Packet* of January 2, 1779, he published the following:

"If Mr. Deane or any other gentleman will procure an order from Congress to inspect an account in my office, or any of Mr. Deane's friends in Congress will take the trouble of coming themselves, I will give him or them my attendance, and show them in handwriting which Mr. Deane is well acquainted with, that the supplies he so pompously plumes himself upon were promised and engaged, and that as a present, before he ever arrived in France; and the part that fell to Mr. Deane was only to see it done, and how he has performed that service the public are acquainted with."

In giving here the purport of the letter from the Commissioners, Paine clearly shows that Deane was in no way concerned with obtaining the supplies, but he is not so certain that they were a gift, adding in the same letter:

"The supplies here alluded to are those which were sent from France in the *Amphitrite, Seine,* and *Mercury,* about two years ago. They had at first the appearance of a present, but whether so or on credit the service was a great and a friendly one."

In his letter of January 5 Paine wrote additionally:

"Those who are now her [Amerca's] allies, prefaced that alliance by an early and generous friendship; yet that we might not attribute too much to human or auxiliary aid, so unfortunate were these supplies that only one ship out of three arrived; the *Mercury* and *Seine* fell into the hands of the enemy."

The indiscretion with which Paine was charged is to be found in this last paragraph. It was perhaps too impulsive patriotism, but nothing more serious could be alleged. Gérard, the French Minister, felt, of course, obliged to complain to Congress, and that body calmed him by voting the fable that his Majesty "did not preface his alliance with any supplies whatever sent to America." To carry out the necessary farce Paine had to be called to account by the Congress. All of the members knew that Paine had documents to substantiate everything he had published, but they did not know these documents officially, and they had been put in the position by their ally's Minister of having to deny Paine's statement. They feared that Paine if summoned might reveal the contents. The Deane articles had been simply signed "Common Sense," and it was necessary for the secretary to acknowledge that he had written them. Con-

gress, fearing to discover its own secrets, planned to allow Paine to utter one word only at the bar.

The complaint from Gérard reached Congress on January 5, 1779, and on the following day came this memorial from Paine:

"HONORABLE SIRS.—Understanding that exceptions have been taken at some parts of my conduct, which exceptions as I am unacquainted with I cannot reply to, I therefore humbly beg leave to submit every part of my conduct public and private, so far as relate to public measures, to the judgment of this honble. House, to be by them approved or censured as they shall judge proper—at the same time reserving to myself that conscious satisfaction of having ever intended well and to the best of my abilities executed these intentions.

"The honble. Congress in April, 1777, were pleased, not only unsolicited on my part, but wholly unknown to me, to appoint me unanimously Secretary to the Committee for Foreign Affairs, which mode of appointment I conceive to be the most honorable that can take place. The salary they were pleased to affix to it was 70 dollars per month. It has remained at the same rate ever since, and is not at this time equal to the most moderate expenses I can live at; yet I have never complained, and always conceiving it my duty to bear a share of the inconveniences of the country, have ever cheerfully submitted to them. This being my situation, I am at this time conscious of no error, unless the cheapness of my services, and the generosity with which I have endeavored to do good in other respects, can be im-

puted to me as a crime, by such individuals as may have acted otherwise.

"As my appointment was honorable, therefore whenever it shall appear to Congress that I have not fulfilled their expectations, I shall, tho' with concern at any misapprehension that might lead to such an opinion, surrender up the books and papers intrusted to my care.

"Were my appointment an office of profit it might become me to resign it, but as it is otherwise I conceive that such a step in me might imply a dissatisfaction on account of the smallness of the pay. Therefore I think it my duty to wait the orders of this honble. House, at the same time begging leave to assure them that whatever may be their determination respecting me, my disposition to serve in so honorable a cause, and in any character in which I can best do it, will suffer no alteration. I am, with profound respect, your honors' dutiful and obt. hble. servant,

"THOMAS PAINE."

Paine was on the same day summoned before Congress, which had its sessions behind closed doors. He was asked by John Jay, the President, if he had written the articles. Paine replied "Yes," and was immediately ordered to withdraw. Finding that Deane's party were determined that he should have no opportunity to divulge any facts before Congress, Paine, on the following day, submitted a second memorial:

"Honorable Sirs.—From the manner in which I was called before the House yesterday, I have reason to suspect an unfavorable disposition in them towards some parts in my late publications. What the parts are against which they object, or what those objections are, are wholly unknown to me. If any gentleman has presented any Memorial to this House which contains any charge against me, or any-ways alludes in a censurable manner to my character or interest, so as to become the ground of any such charge, I request, as a servant under your authority, an attested copy of that charge, and in my present character as a freeman of this country, I demand it. I attended at the bar of this House yesterday as their servant, tho' the warrant did not express my official station, which I conceive it ought to have done, otherwise it could not have been compulsive unless backed by a magistrate. My hopes were that I should be made acquainted with the charge, and admitted to my defence, which I am all times ready to make either in writing or personally.

"I cannot in duty to my character as a freeman submit to be censured unheard. I have evidence which I presume will justify me. And I entreat this House to consider how great their reproach will be should it be told that they passed a sentence upon me without hearing me, and that a copy of the charge against me was refused to me; and likewise how much that reproach will be aggravated should I afterwards prove the censure of this House to be a libel, grounded upon a mistake which they refused fully to inquire into.

"I make my application to the heart of every gentleman in this House, that, before he decides on a point that may

affect my reputation, he will duly consider his own. Did I court popular praise I should not send this letter. My wish is that by thus stating my situation to the House, they may not commit an act they cannot justify.

"I have obtained fame, honor and credit in this country. I am proud of these honors. And as they cannot be taken from me by any unjust censure grounded on a concealed charge, therefore it will become my duty afterwards to do justice to myself. I have no favor to ask more than to be candidly and honorably dealt by; and such being my right I ought to have no doubt but this House will proceed accordingly. Should Congress be disposed to hear me, I have to request that they will give me sufficient time to prepare."

Gérard was not only the Minister from France, but he had identified himself with the commercial interests of Beaumarchais, and he unhesitatingly used the privileges of the alliance to cover the demand of the speculator. Paine had no opportunity whatever to get his case officially before Congress, and determined to resign. He sent his resignation the next day in the following letter:

"Honorable Sirs.—Finding by the Journals of this House, of yesterday, that I am not to be heard, and having in my letter of the same day, prior to that resolution, declared that I could not 'in duty to my character as a freeman submit to be censured unheard,' therefore, consistent

with that declaration, and to maintain that right, I think it my duty to resign the office of Secretary to the Committee for Foreign Affairs, and I do hereby resign the same. The papers and documents in my charge I shall faithfully deliver up to the Committee, either on honor or oath, as they or this House shall direct.

"Considering myself now no longer a servant of Congress, I conceive it convenient that I should declare what have been the motives of my conduct. On the appearance of Mr. Deane's address to the public of the 5 of Dec., in which he said 'The ears of the Representatives were shut against him,' the honor and justice of this House were impeached and its reputation sunk to the lowest ebb in the opinion of the people. The expressions of suspicion and degradation which have been uttered in my hearing and are too indecent to be related in this letter, first induced me to set the public right; but so grounded were they, almost without exception, in their ill opinion of this House, that instead of succeeding as I wished in my first address, I fell under the same reproach and was frequently told that I was defending Congress in their bad designs. This obliged me to go farther into the matters, and I have now reason to believe that my endeavors have been and will be effectual.

"My wish and my intentions in all my late publications were to preserve the public from error and imposition, to support as far as laid in my power the just authority of the Representatives of the people, and to cordiallize and cement the union that has so happily taken place between this country and France.

"I have betrayed no trust because I have constantly employed that trust to the public good. I have revealed no secrets because I have told nothing that was, or I conceive ought to be a secret. I have convicted Mr. Deane of error, and in so doing I hope I have done my duty.

"It is to the interest of the Alliance that the people should know that before America had any agent in Europe the 'public-spirited gentlemen' in that quarter of the world were her warm friends. And I hope this honorable House will receive it from me as a farther testimony of my affection to that Alliance, and of my attention to the duty of my office, that I mention, that the duplicates of the Dispatches of Oct. 6 and 7, 1777, from the *Commissioners*, the originals of which are in the Enemy's possession, seem to require on *that account* a reconsideration.

"His Excellency, the Minister of France, is well acquainted with the liberality of my sentiments, and I have had the pleasure of receiving repeated testimonies of his esteem for me. I am concerned that he should in any instance misconceive me. I beg likewise to have it understood that my appeal to this honorable House for a hearing yesterday was as a *matter of right* in the character of a freeman, which right I ought to yield up to no power whatever. I return my utmost thanks to the honorable Members of this House who endeavored to support me in that right, so sacred to themselves and to their constituents; and I have the pleasure of saying and reflecting that as I came into office an honest man, I go out of it with the same character."

The "Journals of Congress," covering January, 1779, do not mention either of these letters of Paine,

and they were undoubtedly suppressed. The same fate befell several other letters written by Paine to Congress, and it is supposed that John Jay, then President of Congress, suppressed Paine's communications. One of these was dated March 30 and another April 21. Both letters were important, and concerned Deane and the gift from France.

CHAPTER IX

The Vindication of Paine

Hitherto Unpublished Letter from Paine to Laurens.... Gérard Attempts to Hire Paine to Write for Him....Paine Discloses the French Minister's Overtures....British Archives Show Gérard's Financial Interest in Beaumarchais' Scheme....Gouverneur Morris Decides Deane and Beaumarchais Were Plunderers....Both Die in Poverty Abroad.

THERE is an interesting letter of Thomas Paine to Henry Laurens, January 17, 1779, concerning the Deane affair, in the collection of the New York Historical Society. In the first paragraph Paine tells Laurens that he intends to publish in two volumes all of his political and other writings, a plan he did not pursue. The letter is here published for the first time:

"January 17, 1779.

"Dear Sir:

"I received the additional testimony of your friendship, for which, it is needless to say, you have my thanks. It is true I have subjected myself to present inconveniences, but I beg leave to mention that it is my design to publish all of my political and other writings in two volumes, and to set a proper price upon them. I shall begin with the pamphlet 'Common Sense'; and this I believe will make some recompense for the trouble I have been at hitherto. And though I have constantly given every thing I have

yet published to the public gratis, yet no gentleman will expect that I should give away in volumes.

"I feel myself exceedingly hurt by some expressions in Mr. Gérard's letter to Congress of the 14th inst. I have mentioned them to Mr. Mirales and shall write to Mr. Gérard on the subject.

The expressions are:

" 'I entreat you to receive and to express to Congress the great sensibility with which their frank, noble and catagorical manner of destroying those false and dangerous insinuations which might mislead ignorant people, and put arms into the hands of the enemy.'

"I find myself obliged to tell him that I think it convenient to absent myself from the company even of my most intimate friends till he shall be pleased to explain that I am not personally alluded to in this paragraph. I believe my apprehensions were not ill grounded when I said that I believed they wished to get me to submit to a censure.

"The resolution of Congress is more moderate than is either Mr. Jay's or Mr. Gérard's letter. I mean to give Mr. Gérard a most polite opportunity of doing me justice.

"I am, dear sir,

"Your most obedient and obliged humble servant,

"T. Paine.

"Please excuse a scrawl, as I am in haste to get my letter to Mr. G. completed. It is a nice step, but I think I shall manage it with address.

"To the Honorable Henry Laurens."

Paine wrote to Congress on the same topic April 30, as follows:

"On inquiring yesterday of Mr. Thomson, your Secretary, I find that no answer is given to any of my letters. I am unable to account for the seeming inattention of Congress in collecting information at this particular time, from whatever quarter it may come; and this wonder is the more increased when I recollect that a private offer was made to me, about three months ago, amounting in money to £700 a year; yet however polite the proposal might be, or however friendly it might be designed, I thought it my duty to decline it; as it was accompanied with a condition which I conceived had a tendency to prevent the information I have since given, and shall yet give to the country on public affairs.

"I have repeatedly wrote to Congress respecting Mr. Deane's dark incendiary conduct, and offered every information in my power. The opportunities I have had of knowing the state of foreign affairs is greater than that of many gentlemen of this House, and I want no other knowledge to declare that I look on Mr. Deane to be, what Mr. Carmichael calls him, a rascal."

It was Gérard himself who had tried to tempt Paine with an offer of money. The French Minister first called upon Paine when Paine's first attack upon Deane was published. He appreciated Paine's honesty and generosity and they seem to have become friends. Gérard wrote Vergennes, January 10, tell-

ing of his attempts to convince Paine that he was in error in saying that the supplies sent through Beaumarchais were "promised as a gift," but he adds that Paine did not retract. He refers to his letters to Congress. Just one week later Gérard wrote Vergennes on the same subject. In this letter of January 17 he asserts that Congress has dismissed Paine, in which statement the Minister was in error, since Paine resigned and was not dismissed. The two Gérard letters are in the French State Archives. The letter of January 17 follows:

"When I had denounced to Congress the assertions of M. Payne, I did not conceal from myself the bad effects that might result to a head puffed up by the success of his political writings, and the importance he affected. I foresaw the loss of his office, and feared that, separated from the support which has restrained him, he would seek only to avenge himself with his characteristic impetuosity and impudence. All means of restraining him would be impossible, considering the enthusiasm here for the license of the press, and in the absence of any laws to repress audacity even against foreign powers. The only remedy, my lord, I could imagine to prevent these inconveniences, and even to profit by the circumstances, was to have Payne offered a salary in the King's name, in place of that he had lost. He called to thank me, and I stipulated that he should publish nothing on political affairs, nor about Congress, without advising with me, and should employ

his pen mainly in impressing on the people favorable sentiments towards France and the Alliance, of the kind fittest to foster hatred and defiance towards England. He appeared to accept the task with pleasure. I promised him a thousand dollars per annum, to begin from the time of his dismission by Congress. He has already begun his functions in declaring in the *Gazette* that the affair of the military effects has no reference to the Court and is not a political matter. You know too well the prodigious effects produced by the writings of this famous personage among the people of the States to cause me any fear of your disapproval of my resolution."

The Minister adds that he has employed Dr. Cooper, an intimate friend of Franklin. Gérard in a later dispatch to Vergennes speaks of Paine being "sold to the opposition."

"Sold to the opposition" is ironical indeed when applied to one who had sacrificed everything to the cause of America, whose uppermost thought at all times had been the benefit of the country to which he had unreservedly given himself!

The French Minister, eager to substantiate the statements he had made about his friendship with Paine and what he might thereby be able to accomplish, seems to have depended upon the unfamiliarity of Vergennes with the newspapers of Philadelphia.

Paine, as Vergennes did *not* know, had published the overtures that had been made to him.

"Had I been disposed to make money I undoubtedly had many opportunities for it. The single pamphlet 'Common Sense' would at that time of day have produced a tolerable fortune, had I only taken the same profits from the publication which all writers have ever done; because the sale was the most rapid and extensive of anything that was ever published in this country, or perhaps in any other. Instead of which I reduced the price so low, that instead of getting, I stand £39, 11, 0 out of pocket on Mr. Bradford's books, exclusive of my time and trouble; and I have acted the same disinterested part by every publication I have made.

"At the time the dispute arose respecting Mr. Deane's affairs, I had a conference with Mr. Gérard at his own request, and some matters on that subject were freely talked over, which it is here necessary to mention. This was on the 2d of January. On the evening of the same day or the next, Mr. Gérard through the medium of another gentleman * made me a very genteel and profitable offer. My answer to the offer was precisely in these words: 'Any service I can render to either of the countries in alliance, or to both, I ever had done and shall readily do, and Mr. Gérard's *esteem* will be the only compensation I shall desire."

It need hardly be added that Paine never took any money, not one cent, from Gérard. But, being satis-

* "Another gentleman" was M. de Mirales.

fied that the French government might be embarrassed by his references to France's early generosity to America, wrote on January 26, that the letter to which he had alluded had not spoken of "the king of France by any name or title, nor yet the nation of France."

The French Minister could get nothing more than this from Paine, but this much Paine very willingly gave. The writers employed by Gérard, whose letters appeared in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* under the names of "Americanus" and "Honest Politician," wrote what the Minister paid them to write and the affair quieted down until June and July, when Paine challenged "Americanus" on what he had written about terms in a treaty of peace with Britain. Paine plainly intimates his belief that "Americanus" wrote for pay.

Papers in the British Archives prove that Deane and Gérard had for a long time been on terms of intimacy, and that the two had had many long consultations with Vergennes. There is further proof in the *Stevens' Fac-Similes* (see reports of Wentworth and others). If it was true, as was alleged at the time, that Gérard had a financial interest in the supplies sent to America, it is plainly to be seen why he

so strongly opposed Paine's understanding that the supplies forwarded were a gift.

A letter of Gouverneur Morris to John Randolph, of Roanoke, written three years after Paine's death and twenty-three after that of Silas Deane, throws some further light on the involved Deane affair, concerning which Gouverneur Morris had a good deal to do.

Morris had been a Member of Congress during the period of the troublous Deane controversy, and it was the same Morris, who, fifteen years later, as United States Minister to France, had unearthed the receipt for the king's million, which had been charged against this country by Beaumarchais. Gouverneur Morris recognized the fact that Deane and Beaumarchais were plainly plunderers.

This is Morris' letter in full:

"WASHINGTON, Jany. 20, 1812.

"It would give me pleasure to communicate the information you ask, but I can only speak from memory respecting matters, some of which were transacted long ago and did not command my special attention. But it is probable that the material facts can be established by documents in the Secretary of State's office.

"It will, I believe, appear from the correspondence between Mr. Arthur Lee and the Secret and Commercial Committee, that early in our dispute with Great Britain the

French Court made through him a tender of military supplies, and employed as their agent for that purpose M. Beaumarchais, who, having little property and but slender standing in society might (if needful) be disavowed, imprisoned and punished for presuming to use the King's name on such an occasion. In the course of our Revolutionary War, large supplies were sent by M. Beaumarchais under the name of Roderique Hortalez and Co., a supposed mercantile name. But the operations were impeded by complaints of the British Ambassador, Lord Stormont, which obliged the French Court to make frequent denials, protestations, seizure of goods and detention of ships. Every step of this kind bound them more strongly to prevent a disclosure of facts.

"After the Congress returned to Philadelphia, M. de Francy, agent of M. Beaumarchais, applied to Congress for payment. This application was supported on the ground of justice by many who were not in the secret, for the Congress had then so much good sense as not to trust itself with its own secrets. There happened unluckily at that time a feud between Mr. Lee and Mr. Deane. The latter favored (in appearance at least) M. Beaumarchais' claim. Paine, who was clerk to the Secret and Commercial Committee, took part in the dispute, wrote pieces for the gazettes, and at length, to overwhelm Deane and those who defended him with confusion, published a declaration of the facts confidentially communicated to the Committee by Mr. Lee, and signed this declaration as American Secretary for Foreign Affairs.* The French Minister M.

* This is an error. Paine signed "Common Sense," and one of his communications "Thomas Paine."

Gérard, immediately made a formal complaint of that publication, and an equally formal denial of what is contained. The Congress was therefore obliged to believe, or at least to act as if they believed, that Paine had told a scandalous falsehood. He was in consequence dismissed, which indeed he deserved for his impudence if for nothing else.*

"Beaumarchais and his agent had already received from the Committee tobacco and perhaps other articles of produce on account of his demand; what and how much will of course be found from investigating the files of the Treasury. But he wanted and finally obtained a larger and more effectual payment. Bills were drawn in his favor on Dr. Franklin, our Minister in France, at long sight, for about one hundred thousand pounds sterling. This was done in the persuasion that the Doctor would, when they were presented, communicate the fact to Comte de Vergennes, from whom he would afterwards be obliged to solicit the means of payment. It was hoped that the French Court would then interfere and either lay hold of the bills or compel M. Beaumarchais to refund the money, so that no real deduction would on that account be afterwards made from the loans or subsidies to us. The death of all who were privy to it has spread an impenetrable veil over what passed on this occasion between M. Beaumarchais and his employer, but the bills were regularly paid, and we were thereby deprived in a critical moment

* Paine was not dismissed, but resigned. Gouverneur Morris, who always bitterly opposed Paine's republicanism, seems to have retained his dislike of Paine, when the great author was dead.

of the resources which so large a sum would have supplied. When this happened, M. de la Luzerne, then Minister of France at Philadelphia, expressed himself with so much freedom and so much indignation respecting M. Beaumarchais and his claim, that there was reason to believe nothing more would have been heard of it. In that persuasion, perhaps, Dr. Franklin, when he came to settle our national accounts with M. de Vergennes, was less solicitous about a considerable item than he otherwise might have been. He acknowledged as a free gift to the United States the receipt on a certain day of one million livres, for which no evidence was produced. He asked indeed for a voucher to establish the payment, but the Count replied that it was immaterial whether we had received the money or not, seeing that we were not called on for repayment. With this reassuring the old gentleman seems to have been satisfied, and the account was settled accordingly. Perhaps the facts may have been communicated to him under the seal of secrecy, and if so he showed firmness in that he had shared in the plunder with Deane and Beaumarchais.

"Things remained in that state till after the late King of France was dethroned. The Minister of the United States at Paris * was then directed to enquire what had become of the million livres. The correspondence will of course be found in the office of the Secretary of State. It seems that he had the good fortune to obtain copies of M. Beaumarchais' receipt for a million, bearing date on the day when the gift was said to have been made (June 10, 1776),

* The Minister was Morris himself.

so that no reasonable doubt could exist as to the identity of the sum.

"So much, my dear Sir, for what memory can command. You will, I think, find papers containing a more accurate statement in the New York *Evening Post*, about the time when Mr. Rodney's opinion was made public. At least I recollect having seen in that gazette some facts with which I had not been previously acquainted or which I had forgotten. A gentleman from Connecticut, who was on the Committee of Claims last year, can I believe give you the papers. I remember also to have been told by a respectable young gentleman, son of the late Mr. Richard Henry Lee, that important evidence on this subject, secured from his uncle Arthur, was in his possession, and I believe it may be obtained from Mr. Carroll, of Annapolis, or his son-in-law, Mr. Harper, of Baltimore.*

"GOUVERNEUR MORRIS.

"To the Honorable Mr. John Randolph, of Roanoke."

Beaumarchais lost all his wealth in France and went to Holland, where he died in poverty, from a stroke of apoplexy, May 19, 1799. The famous dramatist was lucky to have escaped the guillotine. In his will he left his claim to his daughter, who, in 1835, was paid 800,000 francs, but the million which he had received from the king, and then charged to the United States, was never paid. Deane also died

* The documents to which Morris refers are probably among the Lee Papers preserved at the University of Virginia.

in poverty abroad. He went to England, where he wrote letters to his brother Simeon, which he meant to be intercepted, and in which he advocated submission of the revolting colonists to England. He became the friend of the American traitor Benedict Arnold. He died in Deal, England, August 23, 1789.

The heirs of Silas Deane made a claim on Congress, and in 1842 were paid $37,000. The letters of George III, which contained proof of Deane's treachery, had not then been brought to light. With the information revealed by those letters, Congress would not, of course, have paid any claim of Deane's heirs. (The letters may be found by students in Donne, pp. 145, 363, 380, 381 and 384.)

CHAPTER X

Aftermath of the Deane Affair

Paine a Victim of Secret Diplomacy....He Projects a History of the Revolution....Seeking Compensation from Pennsylvania Executive Council....They Ask Gérard's Permission to Employ Him....The French Minister's Reply....Pennsylvania Assembly Elects Paine Its Clerk....Writing the Preamble of the New State Constitution....Abolishing Slavery in Pennsylvania.

THERE is no doubt that Congress was greatly relieved by the resignation of the congressional secretary. That Paine suffered is certain, but also certain is it that Paine was always self-sacrificing, and never is this characteristic to be more clearly noted than in any matter which concerned the interests of the new-born nation. There were undoubtedly a great many Americans who recognized the fact that Paine was, in this matter of the French King's gift to America, the innocent victim of "diplomacy." Throughout the troubles in Congress they had not forgotten that it was Paine who was the real father of this country, and its most ardent and unselfish supporter.

Paine wrote several able articles in the interest of the young Republic during the Summer of 1779. One of these was his article on the Newfoundland fisheries (see Vol. IV, p. 1).

In his letter of January 17 to Henry Laurens, Paine, it will be remembered, mentioned his intention of publishing all of his "political and other writings in two volumes." Eight months later he again wrote Henry Laurens telling him some further details of his plan, and also revealing something of his mode of life. He spoke, too, of compiling a history of the American Revolution:

"PHILADELPHIA, Sepr. 14, 1779.—DEAR SIR,—It was my intention to have communicated to you the substance of this letter last Sunday had I not been prevented by a return of my fever; perhaps finding myself unwell, and feeling, as well as apprehending, inconveniences, have produced in me some thoughts for myself as well as for others. I need not repeat to you the part I have acted or the principle I have acted upon; and perhaps America would feel the less obligation to me, did she know, that it was neither the place nor the people but the Cause itself that irresistibly engaged me in its support; for I should have acted the same part in any other country could the same circumstances have arisen there which have happened here. I have often been obliged to form this distinction to myself by way of smoothing over some disagreeable ingratitudes, which, you well know, have been shown to me from a certain quarter.

"I find myself so curiously circumstanced that I have both too many friends and too few, the generality of them thinking that from the public part I have so long acted I

cannot have less than a mine to draw from. What they have had from me they have got for nothing, and they consequently suppose I must be able to afford it. I know but one kind of life I am fit for, and that is a thinking one, and, of course, a writing one—but I have confined myself so much of late, taken so little exercise, and lived so very sparingly, that unless I alter my way of life it will alter me. I think I have a right to ride a horse of my own, but I cannot now even afford to hire one, which is a situation I never was in before, and I begin to know that a sedentary life cannot be supported without jolting exercise. Having said thus much, which, in truth, is but loss of time to tell to you who so well know how I am situated, I take the liberty of communicating to you my design of doing some degree of justice to myself, but even this is accompanied with some present difficulties, but it is the easiest, and, I believe, the most useful and reputable of any I can think of. I intend this winter to collect all my publications, beginning with 'Common Sense' and ending with the Fisheries, and publishing them in two volumes, octavo, with notes. I have no doubt of a large subscription. The principal difficulty will be to get paper and I can think of no way more practicable than to desire Arthur Lee to send over a quantity from France in the *Confederacy* if she goes there, and settling for it with his brother. After that work is completed, I intend prosecuting a history of the Revolution by means of a subscription—but this undertaking will be attended with such an amazing expense, and will take such a length of time, that unless the States individually give some assistance therein, scarcely any man could afford to go through it. Some

kind of an history might be easily executed made up of daily events and trifling matters which would lose their importance in a few years. But a proper history cannot even be begun unless the secrets of the other side of the water can be obtained, for the first part is so interwoven with the politics of England that that which will be the last to get at must be the first to begin with—and this single instance is sufficient to show that no history can take place for some time. My design, if I undertake it, is to comprise it in three quarto volumes and to publish one each year from the time of beginning, and to make an abridgment afterwards in an easy agreeable language for a school book. All the histories of ancient wars that are used for this purpose promote no moral reflection, but like the *Beggar's Opera* renders the villain pleasing in the hero. Another thing that will prolong the completion of an history is the want of plates which only can be done in Europe, for that part of a history which is intended to convey description of places or persons will ever be imperfect without them. I have now, sir, acquainted you with my design, and unwilling, as you know I am, to make use of a friend while I can possibly avoid it, I am really obliged to say that I should now be glad to consult with two or three on some matters that regard my situation till such time as I can bring the first of those subscriptions to bear, or set them on foot, which cannot well be until I can get the paper; for should I be disappointed of that, with the subscriptions in my hand, I might be reflected upon, and the reason, tho' a true one, would be subject to other explanations.

"Here lies the difficulty I alluded to in the beginning of this letter, and I would rather wish to borrow something of a friend or two in the interim than run the risk I have mentioned, because should I be disappointed by the paper being taken or not arriving in time, the reason being understood by them beforehand will not injure me, but in the other case it would, and in the mean time I can be preparing for publication. I have hitherto kept all my private matters a secret, but as I know your friendship and you a great deal of my situation, I can with more ease communicate them to you than to another.

"P. S. If you are not engaged to-morrow evening I should be glad to spend part of it with you—if you are, I shall wait your opportunity."

Paine had made it an ethical principle to take no profit from his writings for the cause of independence, and, as we have seen, only the cause itself and the printers benefited by his writings, but Paine thought the time had come, however, when it would be entirely proper to publish his pamphlets in book form, and derive therefrom some compensation for his labor. Although in his letter to Laurens he seems quite resolved to publish his writings in two volumes, the fact is that he never did so. He probably decided eventually to hold to his original resolution, regardless of whether the publications were pamphlets or

subscription books, for to the end of his life he never profited personally from any of his writings.

It is pathetic, indeed, that the man to whom the young nation was so deeply indebted for its independence should be compelled to call attention to his poverty. Henry Laurens was an intimate friend, and Paine could, of course, speak more freely to him on these personal matters than he could to any other.

On September 28 Paine reminded the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania of his needs, and of the fact that he had not received compensation for his services. He now felt he could not afford to continue without remuneration. The Council appreciated the value of Paine's patriotic writings and realized the benefits accruing to the cause from his pen. But it feared anything that might bring displeasure to the French Minister! The president of the Executive Council, Joseph Reed, therefore, on the next day, wrote to Minister Gérard saying that the Council would like to employ Paine if he had no objection! Gérard waited until October 11 to reply. His letter, worded rather ambiguously, tells Reed that Paine had agreed to terms the Minister had offered through Mirales, but which, he says, Paine had not fulfilled. "I willingly," he wrote, "leave M. Payne to enjoy whatever advantages he promises to himself by

his denial of his acceptance of the offers of M. de Mirales and myself. I would even add, sir, that if you feel able to direct his pen in a way useful to the public welfare—which will perhaps not be difficult to your zeal, talents and superior lights,—I will be the first to applaud an attempt in which I have failed."

Receiving no reply from the Council to his letter of September 28, Paine again wrote, October 11:

"HONBLE. SIRS.—Some few days ago I presented a letter to this honble. Board stating the inconveniences which I lay under from an attention to public interest in preference to my own, to which I have recd. no reply. It is to me a matter of great concern to find in the government of this State, that which appears to be a disposition in them to neglect their friends and to throw discouragements in the way of genius and letters.

"At the particular request of the gentleman who presides at this Board, I took up the defence of the Constitution, at a time when he declared to me that unless he could be assisted he must give it up and quit the State; as matters then pressed too heavy upon him, and the opposition was gaining ground; yet this Board has since suffered me to combat with all the inconveniences incurred by that service, without any attention to my interest or my situation. For the sake of not dishonoring a cause, good in itself, I have hitherto been silent on these matters, but I cannot help expressing to this Board the concern I feel on this occasion, and the ill effect which such discouraging

examples will have on those who might otherwise be disposed to act as I have done.

"Having said this much, which is but a little part of which I am sensible, I have a request to make which if complied with will enable me to overcome the difficulties alluded to and to withdraw from a service in which I have experienced nothing but misfortune and neglect. I have an opportunity of importing a quantity of printing paper from France, and intend collecting my several pieces, beginning with 'Common Sense,' into two volumes, and publishing them by subscription, with notes; but as I cannot think of beginning the subscription until the paper arrive, and as the undertaking, exclusive of the paper, will be attended with more expense than I, who have saved money both in the service of the continent and the State, can bear, I should be glad to be assisted with the loan of fifteen hundred pounds for which I will give bond payable within a year. If this should not be complied with, I request that the services I have rendered may be taken into consideration and such compensation made me therefor as they shall appear to deserve.

"I am, honble. sirs, your obt. and humble servt.,

"THOMAS PAINE."

The penning of this letter was, of course, painful and humiliating to Paine, but it was only one of the first of a number of episodes which revealed the ingratitude of nations.

The Pennsylvania constitution, to which Paine refers in the above letter, was the constitution of

1776, in the drafting of which he was assisted by Franklin, Cannon and others.

The Pennsylvania Assembly on November 2, 1779, elected Paine its clerk. There was introduced into the Assembly that same day an act for the abolition of slavery in Pennsylvania. The body of this measure, which was very moderate in its propositions, was drafted by George Bryan, and Thomas Paine wrote the preamble. This preamble, which is a fine piece of literary craftsmanship, and has been greatly admired, is an eloquent denunciation of negro slavery, which accords in sentiment with Paine's earlier writings in behalf of the negroes. Paine seems to have been the only one who, during the period of the American Revolution, gave thought to the negroes and their state of bondage. The phraseology of the preamble is characteristic of the author.

Paine not only partly drafted but he also signed the "Act of Pennsylvania Abolishing Slavery," adopted on March 1, 1780, which was the first of all legislative measures for negro-emancipation. The preamble follows:

"I. When we contemplate our abhorrence of that condition to which the arms and tyranny of Great Britain were exerted to reduce us, when we look back on the variety of dangers to which we have been exposed, and

how miraculously our wants in many instances have been supplied, and our deliverances wrought, when even hope and human fortitude have become unequal to the conflict, we are unavoidably led to a serious and grateful sense of the manifold blessings, which we have undeservedly received from the hand of that Being from whom every good and perfect gift cometh. Impressed with these ideas, we conceive that it is our duty, and we rejoice that it is in our power, to extend a portion of that freedom to others, which has been extended to us, and release from that state of thraldom, to which we ourselves were tryannically doomed, and from which we have now every prospect of being delivered. It is not for us to enquire why, in the creation of mankind, the inhabitants of the several parts of the earth were distinguished by a difference in feature or complexion. It is sufficient to know that all are the work of the Almighty Hand. We find in the distribution of the human species that the most fertile as well as the most barren parts of the earth are inhabited by men of complexions different from ours and from each other; from whence we may reasonably as well as religiously infer, that He, who placed them in their various situations, has extended equally his care and protection to all, and that it becomes not us to counteract his mercies. We esteem it a peculiar blessing granted to us that we are enabled this day to add one more step to universal civilization by removing, as much as possible, the sorrows of those who have lived in undeserved bondage, and from which, by the assumed authority of the Kings of Great Britain, no effectual, legal relief could be obtained. Weaned, by a long course of experience, from those narrow prejudices and

partialities we had imbibed, we find our hearts enlarged with kindness and benevolence towards men of all conditions and nations; and we conceive ourselves at this particular period particularly called upon by the blessings which we have received to manifest the sincerity of our profession, and to give a substantial proof of our gratitude.

"II. And whereas the condition of those persons, who have heretofore been denominated Negro and Mulatto slaves, has been attended with circumstances, which not only deprived them of the common blessings that they were by nature entitled to, but has cast them into the deepest afflictions, by an unnatural separation and sale of husband and wife from each other and from their children, an injury, the greatness of which can only be conceived by supposing that we were in the same unhappy case. In justice, therefore, to persons so unhappily circumstanced, and who, having no prospect before them whereon they may rest their sorrows and their hopes, have no reasonable inducement to render their service to society, which they otherwise might, and also in grateful commemoration of our own happy deliverance from that state of unconditional submission to which we were doomed by the tryanny of Britain.

"III. *Be it enacted,* &c."

CHAPTER XI

The Turn of the Tide

Washington Appeals for Help....Paine Heads a Subscription....His Letter Arouses Enthusiasm....A Large Fund Quickly Raised...."Crisis IX"....University of Pennsylvania Confers Degree on Paine...."Crisis Extraordinary"...."Public Good" Brings About Heated Controversy and Urges a Constitutional Convention.

NEW YEAR'S DAY, 1780, dawned on Washington and his little army at Morristown, New Jersey, suffering great privations. In a Washington letter, written at Morristown on January 5, the commander speaks at some length of the distress of his troops, "both officers and men, many of the latter having been four or five days without meat entirely, and short of bread." He adds: "Some, for their preservation, have been compelled to maraud and rob the inhabitants, and I have it not in my power to punish or reprove the practice."

On May 28, the patriot army still suffering terribly, Washington wrote to Joseph Reed, president of the Pennsylvania Assembly, the most desponding letter he ever penned. Paine, as clerk of the Assembly, read the letter to the members.

"I assure you," Washington wrote, "every idea you can form of our distresses will fall short of the reality. There is such a combination of circumstances to exhaust the patience of the soldiery that it begins at length to be worn out, and we see in every line of the army the most serious features of mutiny and sedition."

The note of despondency pervading the letter made a deep impression upon the Assembly. A deep silence followed the reading of Washington's message. Then one of the members arose and said, "We may as well give up first as last." There was little money in the treasury, but there was enough to pay Paine his salary as clerk. Paine was at once on his feet to say that he gladly subscribed the entire amount, $500, for the relief of the patriot army.

The money was forwarded to Mr. M'Clenaghan with an impassioned letter, which M'Clenaghan read the same evening at a meeting in one of the Philadelphia coffee-houses popular during the Revolutionary War period. The letter evoked great enthusiasm. M'Clenaghan and Robert Morris each immediately subscribed £200, hard money. The subscription, dated June 8, was received by the people with acclaim. In an incredibly short time £300,000 had been subscribed, and with this amount was established a bank in Philadelphia (the Bank of North

America) to supply the army through its campaign. The bank was incorporated by Congress on December 21.

M'Clenaghan visited the originator of the subscription on the day after the coffee-house meeting, and cheered Paine with the news of the wonderful results produced by his letter. To further encourage the soldiers Paine commenced another "Crisis." This was "Crisis IX," dated June 9, 1780. A postscript tells of the fall of Charleston, which Paine attributes to an insufficient supply of provisions. Paine concludes the postscript with these vigorous words:

"The man that does not now feel for the honor of the best and noblest cause that ever a country engaged in, and exert himself accordingly, is no longer worthy of a peaceable residence among a people determined to be free."

A few days before commencing this "Crisis" Paine wrote the following private letter to Joseph Reed, President of the Supreme Executive Council:

"Sunday Morning, June 4:

"Sir,—I trouble you with a few thoughts on the present state of affairs. Every difficulty we are now in arises from an empty treasury and an exhausted credit. These removed and the prospects were brighter. While the war was

carried on by emissions at the pleasure of Congress, any body of men might conduct public business, and the poor were of equal use in government with the rich. But when the means must be drawn from the country the case becomes altered, and unless the wealthier part throw in their aid, public measures must go heavily on.

"The people of America understand *rights* better than *politics*. They have a clear idea of their object, but are greatly deficient in comprehending the means. In the first place, they do not distinguish between sinking the debt and raising the current expenses. They want to have the war carried on, the Lord know how.

"It is always dangerous to spread an alarm of danger unless the prospect of success be held out with it, and that not only as probable, but naturally essential. These things premised, I beg leave to mention that suppose you were to send for some of the richer inhabitants of the city, and state to them the situation of the army and the treasury, not as arising so much from defect in the departments of government as from a neglect in the country generally, in not contributing the necessary support in time. If they have any spirit, any foresight of their own interest or danger, they will promote a subscription either of money or articles, and appoint a committee from among themselves to solicit the same in the several counties; and one State setting the example, the rest, I presume, will follow. Suppose it was likewise proposed to them to deposit their plate to be coined for the pay of the Army, crediting the government for the value, by weight.

"If measures of this kind could be promoted by the richer of the Whigs, it would justify your calling upon the

other part to furnish their proportion without ceremony, and these two measures carried, would make a draft or call for personal service the more palatable and easy.

"I began to write this yesterday. This morning, it appears clear to me that Charleston is in the hands of the enemy, and the garrison prisoners of war. Something must be done, and that something, to give it popularity, must begin with men of property. Every care ought now to be taken to keep goods from rising. The rising of goods will have a most ruinous ill effect in every light in which it can be viewed.

"The army must be reunited, and that by the most expeditious possible means. Drafts should first be countenanced by subscriptions, and if men would but reason rightly, they would see that there are some thousands in this State who had better subscribe thirty, forty, or fifty guineas apiece than run the risk of having to settle with the enemy. Property is always the object of a conqueror, wherever he can find it. A rich man, says King James, makes a bonny traitor; and it cannot be supposed that Britain will not reimburse herself by the wealth of others, could she once get the power of doing it. We must at least recruit eight or ten thousand men in this State, who had better raise a man apiece, though it should cost them a thousand pounds apiece, than not have a sufficient force, were it only for safety sake. Eight or ten thousand men, added to what we have now got, with the force that may arrive, would enable us to make a stroke at New York, to recover the loss of Charleston—but the measure must be expeditious.

"I suggest another thought. Suppose every man, working a plantation, who has not taken the oath of allegiance, in Philadelphia County, Bucks, Chester, Lancaster, Northampton and Berks, were, by the new power vested in the Council, called immediately upon for taxes in kind at a certain value. Horses and wagons to be appriased. This would not only give immediate relief, but popularity to the new power. I would remark of taxes in kind, that they are hard-money taxes, and could they be established on the non-jurors, would relieve us in the articles of supplies.

"But whatever is necessary or proper to be done, must be done immediately. We must rise vigorously upon the evil, or it will rise upon us. A show of spirit will grow into real spirit, but the country must not be suffered to ponder over their loss for a day. The circumstance of the present hour will justify any means from which good may arise. We want rousing.

"On the loss of Charleston I would remark—the expectation of a foreign force arriving will embarrass them whether to go or to stay; and in either case, what will they do with their prisoners? If they return, they will be but as they were as to dominion; if they continue, they will leave New York an attackable post. They can make no new movements for a considerable time. They may pursue their object to the Southward in detachments, but then in every main point they will naturally be at a stand; and we ought immediately to lay hold of the vacancy.

"I am, sir,

"Your obedient humble servant,

"THOMAS PAINE."

Paine's letter shows his intimate acquaintance with the affairs of the country, and his perspicacity in devising plans for furthering the patriot cause.

The indirect reproof of Congress a year before had apparently lost Paine no favor. If there was any prejudice against the writer by reason of the action of Congress in truckling to the French Minister, any such feelings seem now to have been dissipated. Perhaps this resulted from the encouragement felt in consequence of the subscription Paine had headed with the amount of his salary, and also by the visible effects of his pamphlets of March and June, 1780.

The University of Pennsylvania, formerly called the "University of Philadelphia," on Independence Day conferred on Paine the degree of Master of Arts, Joseph Reed, Rev. Mr. Sproat, Bishop White, Rev. Mr. Muhlenberg and the Rev. Mr. Weiborg being among the trustees who voted this honor to Paine. The university greatly honored itself by bestowing this honor on the author of "Common Sense."

In October appeared Paine's "Crisis Extraordinary." Paine himself paid the printer (William Harris, on Second, near Market street, Philadelphia) in order that the price might be kept low. An order paying for ten dozen copies reveals the fact that they were sold at five cents each. In a postscript of two

pages to this "Crisis" Paine tells the dire news, in some detail, of the treachery of Benedict Arnold.

"Public Good," by Paine, appeared at the end of the year. It is a pamphlet of great historical interest and importance (see Vol. IV, p. 53). "Public Good" pointed out that the state of Virginia was in error in its premises regarding State boundaries. It brought about a heated controversy on the subject of State versus National sovereignty. Congress finally (March 1, 1784) accepted Virginia's concession of the disputed western territory, without recognizing it as a donation. Some of Virginia's conditions were accepted and others refused. After the signing of the peace treaty, it was proposed in the Virginia legislature to make Paine a gift for his services to the cause of independence. Objection was made, however, on account of Paine's pamphlet regarding Virginia's boundaries, and the motion was lost. Richard Henry Lee said it was lost by only one vote.

"Public Good" closed with a strong plea for a "continental convention for the purpose of forming a continental constitution, defining and describing the powers and authority of Congress."

CHAPTER XII

Paine's Diplomatic Success

Why Paine's Revolutionary History Was Never Written.... He Resigns His Clerkship of Pennsylvania's Assembly.... Congress Sends Laurens to France for Funds....Paine Plans a Pamphlet Campaign Incognito in England....Laurens Requests Paine's Company to France....Royal Favors Heaped on Paine....They Return With a Shipload of Silver and Needed Supplies....Paine's Financial Straits....A Letter About Deane and Cornwallis

A HISTORY of the American Revolution written by Thomas Paine, the father of American Independence, the one person most competent to write a chronicle of this country's birth and infancy, would have been a treasure, indeed, for this and future ages! Paine, from all points of view, was pre-eminently the man to write the story of that remarkable period. He had participated in nearly all of the notable events; he had himself actually *made* many of the events. He had been a soldier in the patriot army, had suffered with the men in defeat and shared their exaltation over victories. He had occupied important positions both in Congress and in the State government of Pennsylvania. His was the one pen that achieved momentous results, and the signature

"Common Sense" at the end of a pamphlet evoked attention and respect.

What wonder that the far-seeing Franklin repeatedly urged Paine to write the story of the Revolution? His first advice to Paine on this matter was given before the drafting of the Declaration of Independence. In October, 1775, Franklin urged Paine to write a history of the events that led to the rupture with Britain. As the Revolution progressed he placed material in Paine's hands for a chronicle of that most important period in the history of this country.

Paine numbered among his friends nearly all of the significant figures in the Revolution—Samuel Adams, Robert Morris, Washington, Jefferson, George Clymer, David Rittenhouse, Lafayette, Clinton and a host of others; an acquaintance which would have been invaluable in the compiling of so important a work.

That Paine never actually wrote the history of the American Revolution is greatly to be deplored. There were many reasons why Paine did not write the book. Two of the reasons were, of course, preoccupation with other important work, and the consequent lack of time, and also the necessity for earning a living. Paine, always hopeful, expected the time would come when he could commence his labors on this book,

and, as we have seen, refers to his plans in several letters.

On November 3, 1780, in a letter to John Bayard, the Speaker of the Pennsylvania Assembly, Paine mentions that he intends collecting materials for the book, and says that for this reason he would be unable to fulfil the duties of clerk if he were re-elected. He had written a letter of the same tenor to the Speaker on September 14. Paine's office as clerk seems to have ended in November, and he spent the next three months preparing for his history.

Congress being convinced that it would be impossible to obtain in this country the amount it estimated as necessary to continue the war, it was resolved that France should be called upon for aid. The members of Congress held a consultation, and decided upon the appointment of Col. John Laurens, one of Washington's aids, to go abroad to explain the military situation. Young Laurens, who was only twenty-seven, was rather unwilling to accept the mission, but finally agreed, if Paine would accompany him.

Paine had for several months looked forward to an opportunity to cross the ocean and he spoke to his old friend, Gen. Nathaniel Greene, about it. Now

came the chance, and he wrote, confidentially, September 9, 1780, this letter to General Greene:

"Sir,—Last spring I mentioned to you a wish I had to take a passage for Europe, and endeavor to go privately to England. You pointed out several difficulties in the way, respecting my own safety, which occasioned me to defer the matter at that time, in order not only to weigh it more seriously, but to submit to the government of subsequent circumstances. I have frequently and carefully thought of it since, and were I now to give an opinion on it as a measure to which I was not a party, it would be this:—that as the press in that country is free and open, could a person possessed of a knowledge of America, and capable of fixing it in the minds of the people of England, go suddenly from this country to that, and keep himself concealed, he might, were he to manage his knowledge rightly, produce a more general disposition for peace than by any method I can suppose. I see my way so clearly before me in this opinion, that I must be more mistaken than I ever yet was on any political measure, if it fail of its end. I take it for granted that the whole country, ministry, minority, and all, are tired of the war; but the difficulty is how to get rid of it, or how they are to come down from the high ground they have taken, and accommodate their feelings to a treaty for peace. Such a change must be the effect either of necessity or choice. I think it will take at least three or four more campaigns to produce the former, and they are too wrong in their opinions of America to act from the latter. I imagine that next spring will begin with a new Parliament, which is so material a

crisis in the politics of that country that it ought to be attended to by this; for, should it start wrong, we may look forward to six or seven years more of war. The influence of the press rightly managed is important; but we can derive no service in this line, because there is no person in England who knows enough of America to treat the subject properly. It was in a great measure owing to my bringing a knowledge of England with me to America, that I was enabled to enter deeper into politics, and with more success, than other people; and whoever takes the matter up in England must in like manner be possessed of a knowledge of America. I do not suppose that the knowledgment independence is at this time a more unpopular doctrine in England than the declaration of it was in America immediately before the publication of the pamphlet 'Common Sense,' and the ground appears as open for the one now as it did for the other then.

"The manner in which I would bring such a publication out would be under the cover of an Englishman who had made the tour of America *incog.* This will afford me all the foundation I wish for and enable me to place matters before them in a light in which they have never yet viewed them. I observe that Mr. Rose in his speech on Governor Pownall's bill, printed in Bradford's last paper, says that 'to form an opinion on the propriety of yielding independence to America requires an accurate knowledge of the state of that country, the temper of the people, the resources of their Government, '&c. Now there is no other method to give this information a national currency but this,—the channel of the press, which I have ever considered the tongue of the world, and which governs the

sentiments of mankind more than anything else that ever did or can exist.

"The simple point I mean to aim at is to make the acknowledgment of independence a popular subject, and that not by exposing and attacking their errors, but by stating its advantages and apologizing for their errors, by way of accommodating the measure to their pride. The present parties in that country will never bring one another to reason. They are heated with all the passion of opposition, and to rout the ministry, or to support them, makes their capital point. Were the same channel open to the ministry in this country which is open to us in that they would stick at no expense to improve the opportunity. Men who are used to government know the weight and worth of the press, when in hands which can use it to advantage. Perhaps with me a little degree of literary pride is connected with principle; for, as I had a considerable share in promoting the Declaration of Independence in this country, I likewise wish to be a means of promoting the acknowledgment of it in that; and were I not persuaded that the measure I have proposed would be productive of much essential service, I would not hazard my own safety, as I have everything to apprehend should I fall into their hands; but, could I escape in safety, till I could get out a publication in England, my apprehensions would be over, because the manner in which I mean to treat the subject would procure me protection.

"Having said thus much on the matter, I take the liberty of hinting to you a mode by which the expense may be defrayed without any new charge. Drop a Delegate in

Congress at the next election, and apply the pay to defray what I have proposed; and the point then will be, whether you can possibly put any man into Congress who could render as much service in that station as in the one I have pointed out. When you have perused this, I should be glad of some conversation upon it, and will wait on you for that purpose at any hour you may appoint. I have changed my lodgings, and am now in Front Street opposite the Coffee House, next door to Aitkin's bookstore.

"I am, sir, your ob't humble servant,

"THOMAS PAINE."

Paine, of course, accepted with alacrity the invitation from Laurens, doubtless hoping that when the work in France had been accomplished, there would be opportunity to put into effect in England the plan he outlined in his letter to Greene.

Then Paine again wrote to General Greene. This letter, which has not been published heretofore, is probably the last Paine wrote before leaving America:

"Jan'ry 10th, 1781.

"My Dear Sir:

"I have put off the writing of this letter to the last minute lest I should be disappointed by any unexpected circumstance in the journey and voyage I am undertaking. I received your very friendly and affectionate letter from Annapolis for which I thank you. I followed the advice of it and that with the more readiness as it was the advice,

too, of several of my best and warmest friends. Since which Congress have appointed Col. Laurens, Envoy Extraordinary to France, and I shall accompany him there as Secretary. I am desirous of giving you this information because no endeavors of mine, so far as they extend, will be wanting to show the necessity of a re-enforcement of *cash* to the Continent, and troops to the Southward.

"I leave America with the perfect satisfaction of having been to her an honest, faithful and affectionate friend, and I go away with the hope of returning to spend better or more agreeable days with her than those which are past.

"God bless and prosper you.

"Yours sincerely,

"T. PAINE.

"Major-General Greene."

Paine and Laurens started on their voyage to France early in February, 1781, sailing from Boston, and arriving in L'Orient, France, the following month.

It is a matter of record that young Laurens very nearly ruined the plans of the mission to France by some imprudent speech, and Vergennes complained about it, at the same time ascribing it to his inexperience. Paine seems to have made a more favorable impression, as the King, according to Lamartine, "loaded Paine with favors." The King's gift of six millions was "confided into the hands of Franklin and Paine." Their mission to France accomplished,

Paine now told Laurens about his plan of going to England, and probably he also spoke to Franklin about it. He was dissuaded from the project, however. On May 28 he wrote the following letter from Brest to Franklin in Paris:

"I have just a moment to spare to bid you farewell. We go on board in an hour or two, with a fair wind and everything ready. I understand that you have expressed a desire to withdraw from business, and I beg leave to assure you that every wish of mine, so far as it can be attended with any service, will be employed to make your resignation, should it be accepted, attended with every possible mark of honor which your long services and high character in life justly merit."

On June 1 Paine and Laurens sailed for America from Brest on the French frigate *Resolve*, with 2,500,000 livres in silver, and convoying a ship laden with military stores and clothing. The supplies from France arrived safely at Boston, August 25, and they were transported to Philadelphia by sixteen teams of oxen. This timely gift from France enabled us to conduct the campaign which terminated in the surrender of Cornwallis.

Although Paine conceived the plan of obtaining aid from France, and the idea was successfully carried out chiefly by him, he received neither acknowl-

edgment nor compensation for his services, while Laurens, who nearly brought the mission to ruin, received both the glory and the pay. Young Laurens, whose father, Henry Laurens, had been president of the Continental Congress, was a favorite of Washington and a member of his official household, so he hurried to resume his place near Washington, with apparently no thought of Paine's financial situation.

The following friendly letter from Paine to Colonel Laurens reveals the fact that Paine's wallet was very lean at this time:

"PHILADELPHIA, Oct. 4, 1781.—DEAR SIR,—I received your favor (by the post,) dated Sep. 9th, Head of Elk, respecting a mislaid letter. A gentleman who saw you at that place about the same time told me he had likewise a letter from you to me which he had lost, and that you mentioned something to him respecting baggage. This left me in a difficulty to judge whether after writing to me by post, you had not found the letter you wrote about, and took that opportunity to inform me about it. However, I have wrote to Gen. Heath in case the trunk should be there, and inclosed in it a letter to Blodget in case it should not. I have yet heard nothing from either. I have preferred forwarding the trunk, in case it can be done in a reasonable time, to the opening it, and if it cannot, then to open it agreeably to your directions, tho' I have no idea of its being there.

"I went for your boots, the next day after you left town, but they were not done, and I directed the man to bring them to me as soon as finished, but have since seen nothing of him, neither do wish him to bring them just now, as I must be obliged to borrow the money to pay for them; but I imagine somebody else has taken them off his hands. I expect Col. Morgan in town on Saturday, who has some money of mine in his hands, and then I shall renew my application to the bootmaker.

"I wish you had thought of me a little before you went away, and at least endeavored to put matters in a train that I might not have to re-experience what has already past. The gentleman who conveys this to you, Mr. Burke, is an assistant judge of South Carolina, and one to whose friendship I am much indebted. He lodged some time in the house with me.

"I enclose you the paper of this morning, by which you will see that Gillam had not sailed (or at least I conclude so) on the 4th of July, as Major Jackson was deputy toast master, or Burgos-master, or something, at an entertainment on that day. As soon as I can learn anything concerning Gillam I will inform you of it.

"I am with every wish for your happiness and success, &c.

"Please to present my compts. and best wishes to the General. I have wrote to the Marquis and put all my politics into his letter. A paper with Rivington's account of the action is enclosed in the Marquis' letter." *

* The original of this interesting letter still survives. It was for many years in the collection of the late William F. Havemeyer, New York. Then it passed into the hands of the late William

There is some interesting news of Silas Deane and of Cornwallis in the following letter from Paine to his friend, Jonathan Williams, a merchant at Nantes, France, who was a nephew of Benjamin Franklin:

"PHILADELPHIA, Nov. 26, 1781,—DEAR SIR,—Since my arrival I have received a letter from you dated Passy May 18, and directed to me at Brest. I intended writing to you by Mr. Baseley who is counsel at L'Orient but neglected it till it was too late.—Mem: I desired Baseley to mention to you that Mr. Butler of So. Carolina is surprised at Capt. Rob—n's drawing on him for money; this Mr. Butler mentioned to me, and as a friend I communicate it to you.—I sent you Col. Laurens' draft on Madam Babut (I think that is her name) at Nantes for 12 L' d'ors for the expense of the journey but have never learned if you received it.

"Your former friend, Silas Deane, has run his last length. In France he is reprobating America, and in America (by letters) he is reprobating France, and advising her to abandon her alliance, relinquish her independence, and once more become subject to Britain. A number of letters, signed Silas Deane, have been published in the New York papers to this effect; they are believed, by those who formerly were his friends, to be genuine. Mr. Robt. Morris assured me that he had been totally deceived in Deane; but that he now looked upon him to be a bad man, and his reputation totally ruined. Gouverneur

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F. Gable, of Altoona, Pa., and was one of the items dispersed at the auction of his letters and books in New York, December 5, 1923. Its present owner is unknown to the author.

Morris hopped round upon one leg, swore they had all been duped, himself among the rest, complimented me on my quick sight,—and by God, says he, nothing carries a man through the world like honesty:—and my old friend Duer, 'Sometimes a sloven and sometimes a Beau,' says Deane is a damned artful rascal. However, Duer has fairly cleared himself. He received a letter from him a considerable time before the appearance of these in the New York papers—which was so contrary to what he expected to receive, and of such a traitorous cast, that he communicated it to Mr. Luzerne, the Minister.

"Lord Cornwallis with 7247 officers and men are nabbed nicely in the Chesapeake, which I presume you have heard already, otherwise I should send you the particulars. I think the enemy can hardly hold out another campaign. General Greene has performed wonders to the southward, and our affairs in all quarters have a good appearance. The French Ministry have hit on the right scheme, that of bringing their force and ours to act in conjunction against the enemy.

"The Marquis de Lafayette is on the point of setting out for France, but as I am now safely on this side the water again, I believe I shall postpone my second journey to France a little longer.—Lest Doctr. Franklin should not have heard of Deane I wish you would write to him, and if anything new transpires in the meantime and the Marquis does not set off too soon, I shall write by him.

"Remember me to Mr. & Mrs. Johnstone, Dr. Pierce, Mr. Watson & Ceasey and Mr. Wilt. Make my best wishes

to Mrs. Williams, Mrs. Alexander, and all the good girls at St. Germain.

"I am your friend, &c.,

"THOMAS PAINE.

"P. S. Mind, I'll write no more till I hear from you. The French fleet is sailed from the Chesapeake, and the British fleet from New York—and since writing the above, a vessel is come up the Delaware, which informs that he was chased by two French frigates to the southward of Chesapeake, which, on their coming up, acquainted him that the French fleet was a head in chase of a fleet which they supposed to be the British.

"N. B. The French fleet sailed the 4th of this month, and the British much about the same time—both to the southward." *

* This letter is in the collection of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

CHAPTER XIII

An Author's Difficulties

Financial Distresses....An Appeal to Washington....Unpublished Letter to Robert Morris...."Crisis X"...."Crisis Supernumerary"....Reply to Abbé Raynal's Book....Exchange of Letters With Washington.

FIVE years after the Declaration of Independence the man who first proposed such a measure sat in his little attic bedroom on Second Street, Philadelphia, writing a letter to General Washington, explaining, confidentially, the distressing financial situation in which he found himself as a result of giving everything to the patriot cause.

He had unselfishly presented his writings and copyrights, all that produces revenue for an author, to the object upon which he had set his heart, liberty for the oppressed colonies. His sacrifices for the cause had made him poor indeed.

Thomas Paine, "the morning star of the Revolution," * the recipient of praise from all its leaders, now forced to call attention to his miserable financial situation!

Paine was very well acquainted with Washington and he knew that Washington appreciated the value

* John Clark Ridpath.

of his writings for the patriot cause. The following letter is confidential, and it may be mentioned that if some passages seem egotistical, Washington and others in the forefront of the nation's affairs had been far more praiseful of Paine's services.

"SECOND STREET, OPPOSITE THE QUAKER MEETING-HOUSE, Nov. 30, 1781.

"SIR,—As soon as I can suppose you to be a little at leisure from business and visits, I shall, with much pleasure, wait on you, to pay you my respects and congratulate you on the success you have most deservedly been blest with.

"I hope nothing in the perusal of this letter will add a care to the many that employ your mind; but as there is a satisfaction in speaking where one can be conceived and understood, I divulge to you the secret of my own situation; because I would wish to tell it to somebody, and as I do not want to make it public, I may not have a fairer opportunity.

"It is seven years, *this day*, since I arrived in America, and tho' I consider them as the most honorary time of my life, they have nevertheless been the most inconvenient and even distressing. From an anxiety to support, as far as laid in my power, the reputation of the Cause of America, as well as the Cause itself, I declined the customary profits which authors are entitled to, and I have always continued to do so; yet I never thought (if I thought at all on the matter,) but that as I dealt generously and honorably by America, she would deal the same by

me. But I have experienced the contrary—and it gives me much concern, not only on account of the inconvenience it has occasioned to me, but because it unpleasantly lessens my opinion of the character of a country which once appeared so fair, and it hurts my mind to see her so cold and inattentive to matters which affect her reputation.

"Almost everybody knows, not only in this country but in Europe, that I have been of service to her, and as far as the interest of the heart could carry a man I have shared with her in the worst of her fortunes, yet so confined have been my private circumstances that for one summer I was obliged to hire myself as a common clerk to Owen Biddle of this city for my support: but this and many others of the like nature I have always endeavored to conceal, because to expose them would only serve to entail on her the reproach of being ungrateful, and might start an ill opinion of her honor and generosity in other countries, especially as there are pens enough abroad to spread and aggravate it.

"Unfortunately for me, I knew the situation of Silas Deane when no other person knew it, and with an honesty, for which I ought to have been thanked, endeavored to prevent his fraud taking place. He has himself proved my opinion right, and the warmest of his advocates now very candidly acknowledge their deception.

"While it was everybody's fate to suffer I cheerfully suffered with them, but tho' the object of the country is now nearly established and her circumstances rising into prosperity, I feel myself left in a very unpleasant situation. Yet I am totally at a loss what to attribute it to; for wherever I go I find respect, and everybody I meet treats me

with friendship; all join in censuring the neglect and throwing blame on each other, so that their civility disarms me as much as their conduct distresses me. But in this situation I cannot go on, and as I have no inclination to differ with the country or to tell the story of her neglect, it is my design to get to Europe, either to France or Holland. I have literary fame, and I am sure I cannot experience worse fortune than I have here. Besides a person who understood the affairs of America, and was capable and disposed to do her a kindness, might render her considerable service in Europe, where her situation is but imperfectly understood and much misrepresented by the publications which have appeared on that side the water, and tho' she has not behaved to me with any proportionate return of friendship, my wish for her prosperity is no ways abated, and I shall be very happy to see her character as fair as her cause.

"Yet after all there is something peculiarly hard that the country which ought to have been to me a home has scarcely afforded me an asylum.

"In thus speaking to your Excellency, I know I disclose myself to one who can sympathize with me, for I have often cast a thought at your difficult situation to smooth over the unpleasantness of my own.

"I have begun some remarks on the Abbé Raynal's 'History of the Revolution.' In several places he is mistaken, and in others injudicious and sometimes cynical. I believe I shall publish it in America, but my principal view is to republish it in Europe both in French and English.

"Please, Sir, to make my respectful compts. to your Lady, and accept to yourself the best wishes of,

"Your obedt. humble servant,

"THOMAS PAINE.

"His Excellency General WASHINGTON."

It seems almost quixotic that any author should give away the profits accruing from his pen, but Paine's Quaker training impelled him to such a course. He could not participate in any capacity that did not seem "sacred," and in a "sacred" cause he could not be a hireling.

But Paine's scruples caused the author great monetary inconveniences. In a very interesting letter to his friend, Robert Morris, who was in charge of the fiscal affairs of the nation, Paine mentions having only two "Louis d'or," and says that he has made General Washington, an old friend, acquainted with his financial situation. He reviews his life and his work since he came to America, and he refers to "the two traitors, Arnold and Deane." This interesting letter, which has not been published previously, follows in full:

Jany 10th 1781

My Dear Sir

I have put off the writing this letter to the last Minute but I should be disappointed by any unexpected Circumstance in the journey and Voyage I am undertaking — I received your very friendly and affectionate letter from ~~Rotterdam~~ Amsterdam for which I thank you — I followed the advice of it and that with the more readiness as it was the advice to of several of my best and warmest friends — Since which Honours have appointed Col Laurens Envoy Extraordinary to France. and I shall accompany him there as Secretary — I am desirous of giving you this information because no endeavours of mine so far as they extend will be wanting to show the necessity of a reinforcement of Cash ~~and [illegible]~~ to the Continent and Troops to the southward

I leave America with the perfect Satisfaction of having ~~[illegible]~~ been to her an honest faithful and affectionate friend, and I go away with the hope of returning to spend better or more agreeable days with her than those which are past

God bless and prosper you

yours sincerely

Paine

Mayor Genl Greene

"Philadelphia, February 20, 1782.

"Robert Morris, Esq.,

"Dear Sir:

"It is upwards of seven years since I came to America and above six since I published 'Common Sense.' My situation from the time of my becoming a public man has been exceedingly inconvenient, and nothing but the purest attachment to, and a natural affection for, a Cause which I knew and felt to be right, and in which I found I could be useful, could have held me so long and so invariably under such difficult circumstances; yet these I have carefully and constantly concealed because it could answer no service to the interest of America to represent her under the character of ingratitude. I am sensible that he who means to do mankind a real service must set down with the determination of putting up, and bearing with all their faults, follies, prejudices and mistakes until he can convince them that he is right, and that his object is a general good, and I am persuaded, from your own experience, that you are of the same opinion.

"We have now got rid of two traitors, Arnold and Deane, and tho' the event, so far as respects the latter, has proved me right, it has at the same time found nobody wrong. That they were alone in their crimes every one must see, and thus, the mischief of their secret defection being remedied in their detection, the minds, hit asunder by their contrivance, unite with ease, confidence and satisfaction.

"General Washington is the only person (except Col. Laurens) to whom I fully and unreservedly communicated my situation, and I was under a pressing necessity of doing

it. I found my mind burdened and my situation difficult, and as sincerely as I wished the prosperity of a just Cause, I had it no longer in my power to go on as I had done. My reason for mentioning it to him, in preference to any other, was because his judgment or his friendship in the case would and must also be supposed to operate free and clear from himself, under no other influence than that of his own mind. I am therefore under no difficulty of accepting the proposal, because I will know that it is not only out of friendship to me, but out of justice to me, and without which I must be obliged to withdraw my mind from that line in which I can best serve the community, and apply myself to the thought of getting a livelihood. I have the honest pride of thinking and ranking myself among the founders of a new and independent world, and I should suffer exceedingly to be put out of that track.

"As I am now speaking my mind and situation very unreservedly, I take the liberty of mentioning, for reasons I shall hereafter assign, that I wish that either some allowance could be made for my going to France, or that the salary might take place from the time of my returning to America. I shall state the manner how that business arose, and the inconvenience it has occasioned to me, which has thrown me so back that it will be some time before I get clear, and I should like to feel myself clear at once.

"Seeing of the distressed situation of the Army and the country at the time I was clerk of the House of Assembly, last September was a twelve month, and seeing no prospect of its being better, and that the matter was not sufficiently taken to heart, I drew up the Crisis Extraordinary, to show the necessity as well as the advantage of

taxation, and likewise wrote a letter addressed to Count Vergennes, which is enclosed; but not willing to presume on my own opinion in a matter of such nicety, I showed it to some Members of Congress, and after several conversations the proposition of sending a person over to France was adopted. Col. Laurens was exceedingly averse to going. He mentioned to me that tho' he was well acquainted with the military, he was not with the political line, and proposed my going wtih him as secretary. As I was unwilling to give umbrage to several who at that time, from mistake, were not my friends, I declined appearing officially, but agreed to go as a companion. I was then on the point of establishing a newspaper, had purchased twenty reams to begin with, and Mr. Izzard sent to St. Eustace for fifty more, but this I relinquished to go the voyage. After settling you my pay with the House of Assembly, and discharging everything I owed, I had as much left as purchased me ninety dollars in bills of exchange, which I got cash for of Mr. Moylan the instant I arrived at L'Orient. As we were not always together, I paid my separate expenses as long as this money lasted without thinking anything about the matter. When the business was finished, I was very desirious; as I was in Europe, to write a pamphlet and send it over to Almon in London to be printed, and to return in the frigate which was to bring the second supply of money. But Col. Laurens was so exceedingly anxious for my returning with him, and as he had nobody to confide in, in case anything had happened to him on the passage, I quitted my design at his request. It was his intention to mention the matter to Congress, or at least to some of the Members

but his haste to get away, and his passion to join the army, put everything else out of his mind, and I forbore to mention the least hint on the subject. Inclosed is his last letter to me, of December 13th, when he left me to set off. I had only two L'or's and have been ever since upon expense.

"Mr. Ferguson, Gen'l. Gadsden and several of the South Carolina gentlemen proposed my coming to Charlestown, in case they should get possession, and to draw on them here for what money I might want for that purpose, but their disappointment became mine. I have now circumstantially related to you my situation, which will of itself point out the reason why I wish some advances might be made in either of these modes I have mentioned, for although I shall feel myself under perplexities, or be obliged to lay myself under obligations for a considerable time, whereas I would wish to stand clear at once and think no more about past embarrassments, for although I have had a hard time of it [in] America, I would gladly forget it, and you will please to observe that the inconveniences which I mention are from the very service on which I was employed."

A few days later "Crisis" X was issued on March 5, 1782.

Paine, Washington and Robert Morris met in Paine's rooms on Second Street, Philadelphia, to discuss before publication Paine's "Crisis" XI, and some other matters. The meeting resulted from this invitation of Paine to Washington, dated March 17, 1782:

"You will do me a great deal of pleasure if you can make it convenient to yourself to spend a part of an evening at my apartments, and eat a few oysters or a crust of bread and cheese; for besides the favor you will do me, I want much to consult with you on a matter of public business, tho' of a secret nature, which I have already mentioned to Mr. Morris, whom I likewise intend to ask, as soon as yourself shall please to mention the evening when."

Five days later "Crisis" XI appeared. Referring to Britain, Paine says "Beaten, but not humble; condemned, but not penitent. They act like men trembling at fate and catching at a straw. From this convulsion in the entrails of their politics, it is more than probable that the mountain groaning in labor will bring forth a mouse."

The next work of Paine was his public letter to Sir Guy Carleton, who was in command in New York. This he published as a "Supernumerary Crisis." It was really a plea for the life of a man—an enemy—guiltless of crime and selected by lot as a sacrifice under military rules. (See Vol. III, p. 211.)

"Letter to the Abbé Raynal" (Vol. IV, p. 117) was Paine's next publication. It was dated "Philadelphia, August 21, 1782," and is the work to which Paine refers in his letter of Nov. 30, 1781, to Wash-

ington. Paine sent Washington fifty copies of his Raynal work "for the use of the army," as soon as it was "off the press."

Paine wrote Washington from Bordentown, New Jersey, September 7, 1782, as follows:

"I have the honor of presenting you with fifty copies of my 'Letter to the Abbé Raynal,' for the use of the army, and to repeat to you my acknowledgments for your friendship.

"I fully believe we have seen our worst days over. The spirit of the war, on the part of the enemy, is certainly on the decline fully as much as we think. I draw this opinion not only from the present promising appearance of things, and the difficulties we know the British Cabinet is in; but I added to it the peculiar effect which certain periods of time have, more or less, on all men. The British have accustomed themselves to think of *seven years* in a manner different to other portions of time. They acquire this partly by habit, by reason, by religion, and by superstition. They serve seven years' apprenticeship—they elect their Parliament for seven years—they punish by seven years' transportation, or the duplicate or triplicate of that term—they let their leases in the same manner, and they read that Jacob served seven years for one wife, and after that seven years for another; and the same term likewise extinguishes all obligations (in certain cases) of debt, or matrimony: and thus this particular period of time, by a variety of concurrences, has obtained an influence on their mind. They have now had seven years of

war, and are no farther on the Continent than when they began. The superstitious and populous part will therefore conclude that *it is not to be*, and the rational part of them will think they have tried an unsuccessful and expensive experiment long enough, and that it is in vain to try it any longer, and by these two joining in the same eventual opinion the obstinate part among them will be beaten out, unless, consistent with their former sagacity, they get over the matter at once by passing a new declaratory Act *to bind Time in all cases whatsoever*, or declare him a rebel."

Washington replied appreciatively, concluding his letter with an expression of esteem for the author.

HEAD-QUARTERS, VERPLANK'S POINT, September 18, 1782.—SIR,—I have the pleasure to acknowledge your favor, informing me of your proposal to present me with fifty copies of your last publication for the amusement of the army. For this intention you have my sincere thanks, not only on my own account, but for the pleasure, which I doubt not the gentlemen of the army will receive from the perusal of your pamphlets. Your observations on the *period of seven years*, as it applies itself to and affects British minds, are ingenious, and I wish it may not fail of its effects in the present instance. The measures and the policy of the enemy are at present in great perplexity and embarrassment—but I have my fears, whether their necessities (which are the only operating motives with them, are yet arrived to that point, which must drive them unavoid-

ably into what they will esteem disagreeable and dishonorable terms of peace,—such, for instance, as an absolute, unequivocal admission of American independence, upon the terms on which she can accept it. For this reason, added to the obstinacy of the King, and the probable consonant principles of some of the principal ministers, I have not so full a confidence in the success of the present negotiation for peace as some gentlemen entertain. Should events prove my jealousies to be ill founded, I shall make myself happy under the mistake, consoling myself with the idea of having erred on the safest side, and enjoying with as much satisfaction as any of my countrymen the pleasing issue of our severe contest.

"The case of Captain Asgill has indeed been spun out to a great length—but, with you, I hope that its termination will not be unfavorable to this country.

"I am, sir, with great esteem and regard,

"Your most obedient servant,

"G. WASHINGTON."

CHAPTER XIV

The Horizon Brightens

Paine Upholds the Union in Rhode Island Newspapers.... At Home in Bordentown, New Jersey....Interest in Science and Invention....Washington Entertains Paine at Rocky Hill....Paine Writes the Last "Crisis"....Congress Votes Paine $3,000 and Pennsylvania £500....New York Gives Him a Farm Near New Rochelle....Efforts of Washington, Madison, Jefferson and Others on Paine's Behalf.

RHODE ISLAND, smallest of the States in size, being jealous of its "sovereignty," objected strenuously to entering a Union even though that Union gave it equal legislative power with the greatest of the States. Paine wrote articles for the Providence *Gazette* and Newport *Mercury* toward the close of 1782, and the beginning of 1783, pointing out the advantages of coming into the Union of States. A great controversy ensued. "What," asked Paine, "would the sovereignty of any individual State be, if left to itself to contend with a foreign power?" Paine visited Providence in January, 1783. He wrote and published six letters in the Rhode Island papers. Rhode Island was, it will be remembered, the last of the States to enter the Union.

Washington, on April 18, 1783, made a formal announcement of the termination of hostilities. Paine

commemorated the eighth anniversary of the collision at Lexington by publishing, on April 19, his "Thoughts on the Peace," commencing with the words "The times that tried men's souls are over, and the greatest and completest revolution the world ever knew, gloriously and happily accomplished."

About this time Paine bought a little house at Bordentown, N. J., on a piece of ground measuring one-fifth of an acre. It adjoined the property of his intimate friend, Colonel Joseph Kirkbride, who, like Paine, was interested in scientific matters, and who was a staunch believer in Paine's political principles. Paine's house is no longer in existence, and Kirkbride's home at Hill Top has been swallowed up by an academy for young women. At Bordentown Paine became acquainted with John Hall, a mechanician, who helped in constructing models of Paine's inventions.

Too little attention has been paid to Paine's inventions and his great genius in mechanical creations. He invented the iron-bridge, a planing machine and other important contrivances, and his fertile mind evolved the principle employed for the propulsion of the automobile of today, and the principle of the modern central draught oil burner. In Paine's time bridges were made of wood or stone, and Paine's iron

bridge was a distinct novelty. The great steel bridges of today are merely an adaptation of steel in place of iron. Paine's model of his first iron bridge was made in Bordentown.

Paine wished now to devote himself to invention, but before settling down to such work he desired to visit his aged parents in England. He was not, however, financially in a position to do this. Robert Morris visiting him at this juncture recommended that Paine call the attention of Congress to many services for which he had not been compensated. The nominal salary of $70 a month for his secretaryship of the Committee of Foreign Affairs amounted in fact to only $15.

The perilous journey to France with John Laurens, and the safe return of both to America with 2,500,000 livres in silver and a great supply of clothing and military stores, at a time when British ships were keenly searching the seas for American prizes, and could have wished for no more desirable quarry than the author of "Common Sense," had, like other services of this disinterested patriot, never been rewarded.

Great festivities followed the surrender of Cornwallis. Lavish praise was showered upon Washington and Congress, then in session at Princeton,

prepared for him a mansion at Rocky Hill, not far distant. Letters of that period tell of the general's happiness and the conviviality at Rocky Hill. Paine was forgotten in the festivities and lived in the seclusion of poverty at Bordentown.

A letter came one day from Rocky Hill which, for the time being, at least, dispersed the gloom of Paine's little cottage. That Washington was not unmindful, at this period, of Paine's great services to this country is evident by what he wrote:

"ROCKY HILL, Sept. 10, 1783.

"DEAR SIR,

"I have learned since I have been at this place that you are at Bordentown. Whether for the sake of retirement or economy, I know not. Be it for either, for both, or whatever it may, if you will come to this place, and partake with me, I shall be exceedingly happy to see you.

"Your presence may remind Congress of your past services to this country; and if it is in my power to impress them, command my best services with freedom, as they will be rendered cheerfully by one who entertains a lively sense of the importance of your works, and who, with much pleasure, subscribes himself,

"Your sincere friend,

"G. WASHINGTON."

Paine replied as follows:

"Borden Town, Sept. 21st.—Sir,—I am made exceedingly happy by the receipt of your friendly letter of the 10th instant, which is this moment come to hand; and the young gentleman that brought it, a son of Col. Geo. Morgan, waits while I write this. It had been sent to Philadelphia, and on my not being there, was returned, agreeable to directions on the outside, to Col. Morgan at Princetown, who forwarded it to this place.

"I most sincerely thank you for your good wishes and friendship to me, and the kind invitation you have honored me with, which I shall with much pleasure accept.

"On the resignation of Mr. Livingston in the winter and likewise of Mr. R. Morris, at [the same] time it was judged proper to discontinue the matter which took place when you were in Philadelphia. It was at the same time a pleasure to me to find both these gentlemen (to whom I was before that time but little known) so warmly disposed to assist in rendering my situation permanent, and Mr. Livingston's letter to me, in answer to one of mine to him, which I enclose, will serve to show that his friendship to me is in concurrence with yours.

"By the advice of Mr. Morris I presented a letter to Congress expressing a request that they would be pleased to direct me to lay before them an account of what my services, such as they were, and situation, had been during the course of the war. This letter was referred to a committee, and their report is now before Congress, and contains, as I am informed, a recommendation that I be appointed historiographer to the continent. I have desired

some members that the further consideration of it be postponed, until I can state to the committee some matters which I wish them to be acquainted with, both with regard to myself and the appointment. And as it was my intention, so I am now encouraged by your friendship to take your confidential advice upon it before I present it. For though I was never at a loss in writing on public matters, I feel exceedingly so in what respects myself.

"I am hurt by the neglect of the collective ostensible body of America, in a way which it is probable they do not perceive my feelings. It has an effect in putting either my reputation or their generosity at stake; for it cannot fail of suggesting that either I (nothwithstanding the appearance of service) have been undeserving their regard or that they are remiss towards me. Their silence is to me something like condemnation, and their neglect must be justified by my loss of reputation, or my reputation supported at their injury; either of which is alike painful to me. But as I have ever been dumb on everything which might touch national honor so I mean ever to continue so.

"Wishing you, Sir, the happy enjoyment of peace and every public and private felicity I remain, &c.

"THOMAS PAINE.

"Col. Kirkbride at whose house I am, desires me to present you his respectful compliments."

Paine visited Washington in his Rocky Hill headquarters and had a few happy days there meeting such old comrades of the Revolution as Cobb, Lin-

coln and Humphreys. While Paine was a guest at Rocky Hill he wrote his last number of the "Crisis," dated December 9, 1783, addressed "To the People of America." It was published under the title "A Supernumerary Crisis." (See Vol. III, p. 249.)

Many things were working against Paine. A good many Members of Congress were distinctly hostile to him, because of his extreme "republican" opinions. There were many men, even in Congress, who yearned for the stability a monarchy was thought to give. And, incredible as it seems to us today, there were many, royalist in principle, who would have preferred a new monarchy in America to a republic.

Partisan politics had replaced pure patriotism. The jealousies of the States also militated against Paine, who was an active worker for "a more perfect Union." Congress wrangled over the matter for a long time and then voted Paine $3000. The sum originally planned was $6000, but in the course of the haggling the sum was cut in half.

The State of New York presented Paine a farm of "about three hundred acres" "in consideration for the eminent services rendered (by him) in the progress of the late war."

The act of the New York State Legislature (seventh session, 1784, Chap. 64, Sec. XXXI) passed on May 12, 1784, read as follows:

"An Act for the speedy sale of the confiscated and forfeited estates within this State and for other purposes therein mentioned.

"*And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid,* That it shall and may be lawful to and for the said commissioners of forfeitures for the southern district, and he is hereby authorized and required in consideration for the eminent services rendered to the United States in the progress of the late war by Thomas Paine, Esquire, and as a testimony of the sense which the people of this State entertain of his distinguished merit to grant and release in due form of law unto the said Thomas Paine, and to his heirs and assigns forever in fee simple, all that certain farm or plantation situate in the township of New Rochelle in the County of Westchester, formerly belonging to and usually called the farm of Captain Bailey, deceased, and afterward called Devoe's lower farm, containing by estimation about three hundred acres, and which became forfeited, and is now vested in the people of this State by the conviction of Frederick Devoe." *

Devoe, whose estate was confiscated, was a Tory sympathizer with the British, whom he is said to have secretly aided while living on the farm that was

* The farm at New Rochelle had a fine stone house on it, which had once been a patrimonial mansion of the Jays. When Paine went there to take possession he received a hearty and distinguished welcome. During Paine's absence in Europe, as a member of the French Convention, in later years, the house was mysteriously destroyed by fire. Upon returning from Europe Paine built himself a frame dwelling surmounting the hill on the land south of what is now Paine Avenue, New Rochelle, known at the time of Paine's residence there as "Paine Lane."

destined to be given to Paine for the author's "eminent services" against the British. When the farm was confiscated, Devoe fled to British territory—Nova Scotia—dying there a few years later.

Paine was by no means relieved of pecuniary worry by the gift from New York State, but his friends expected the other States would follow New York's example. Pennsylvania voted Paine five hundred pounds. As stated previously, in Virginia a bill was introduced, June 28, 1784, awarding Paine a valuable tract of land, and the bill passed two readings and was killed on the third reading. There is no doubt that prejudice resulting from jealousy on account of Paine's pamphlet "Public Good," concerning Virginia's State boundary, was responsible for the adverse vote. (See Vol. IV, p. 228.) One vote only lost the bill.

Paine's friend, James Madison, wrote to Washington, July 2, about the fate of the bill:

The stone house had been on that part of the farm north of the lane. In 1910 the man into whose possession the house had passed long years after Paine's death, feeling no patriotic or other interest in the dwelling, and wishing it out of his way, that he might erect a large stone residence, offered it to anyone who would move it away. An officer of the Huguenot Association happening along offered to remove the frame dwelling. In this way it became the property of that organization, which (1925) still holds it.

"The easy reception it found, induced the friends of the measure to add the other moiety to the proposition, which would have raised the market value of the donation to about four thousand pounds, or upwards, though it would not probably have commanded a rent of more than one hundred pounds per annum. In this form the bill passed through two readings. The third reading proved that the tide had suddenly changed, for the bill was thrown out by a large majority. An attempt was next made to sell the land in question, and apply two thousand pounds of the money to the purchase of a farm for Mr. Paine. This was lost by a single voice. Whether a greater disposition to reward patriotic and distinguished exertions of genius will be found on any succeeding occasion, is not for me to predetermine.

"Should it finally appear that the merits of the man, whose writings have so much contributed to enforce and foster the spirit of independence in the people of America, are unable to inspire them with a just beneficence, the world, it is to be feared, will give us as little credit for our policy as for gratitude in this particular."

Washington had tried to aid matters for Paine by writing letters in advocacy of the Virginia bill to Madison, Patrick Henry and Richard Henry Lee. They were written in vain, as we have seen.

While Virginia deliberately slighted Paine, she voted a statue to Washington! The final paragraph of Madison's letter, reproduced above, is indeed a fitting commentary on the nation's ingratitude.

Congress never repaid Paine for the expenses of the journey to France with Laurens. The sum Congress voted him was inadequate to cover the expenditure. Paine had not wished a gratuity, but only asked that his bills be paid. It is not to be wondered that Paine vehemently declared that "Congress has acted dishonorably by me."

Paine's unselfish devotion not only to the cause of American independence, but to the interests of this country after its establishment, has few parallels in the world's history. Referring to Paine James Monroe confidently wrote:

"The crime of ingratitude has not yet stained, and I hope never will stain, our national character. To the welfare of Thomas Paine the Americans are not, nor can they be, indifferent."

The great leaders of the Revolutionary War period, such men as Jefferson, Franklin, Washington, Adams, Richard Henry Lee, Robert Morris, Madison, Laurens, set a proper estimate upon the value of Paine's work. The tributes of these men to the founder of this nation would fill many pages of this book. They knew the man, they knew what he had accomplished. Their recorded judgment will stand for all time.

CHAPTER XV

Progress as an Inventor

Paine and The Bank of North America....Exchange of Letters With Franklin....A Smokeless Candle....Designing the First Iron Bridge....Paine's Thoughts Turn to Europe....The Bridge Model Coldly Received in Philadelphia.

PAINE wrote in 1785 a pamphlet which prevented the repeal of the charter granted the Bank of North America. This bank had its beginning in the subscription Paine headed with $500 for the relief of Washington's suffering army. A party had arisen in Philadelphia intent upon the destruction of this bank, which had been very successful, had many depositors and large deposits. Paine's pamphlet was entitled "Dissertations on Government; the Affairs of the Bank; and Paper Money." (Vol. IV, p. 219.) The pamphlet was published in the beginning of 1786. There is no doubt that its forceful presentation of the case for honest money saved the bank.

While Paine was busy writing this pamphlet, he found time to write his old friend Franklin. This is the letter:

"New York, Sept. 23, 1785.

"My Dear Sir,—It gives me exceeding great pleasure to have the opportunity of congratulating you on your

return home, and to a land of Peace; and to express to you my heartfelt wishes that the remainder of your days may be to you a time of happy ease and rest. Should Fate prolong my life to the extent of yours, it would give me the greatest felicity to have the evening scene some resemblance of what you now enjoy.

"In making you this address I have an additional pleasure in reflecting, that, so far as I have hitherto gone, I am not conscious of any circumstance in my conduct that should give you one repentant thought for being my patron and introducer to America.

"It would give me great pleasure to make a journey to Philadelphia on purpose to see you, but an interesting affair I have with Congress makes my absence at this time improper.

"If you have time to let me know how your health is, I shall be much obliged to you.

"I am, dear Sir, with the sincerest affection and respect,

"Your obedient, humble servant,

"THOMAS PAINE.

"The Hon'ble BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, Esquire.

"My address is Messrs. Lawrence and Morris, Merchants."

Paine was gratified to receive promptly the following reply, dated Philadelphia, Sept. 24, 1785:

"DEAR SIR,—I have just received your friendly congratulations on my return to America, for which, as well

as your kind wishes for my welfare, I beg you to accept my most thankful acknowledgments. Ben is also very sensible of your politeness, and desires his respects may be presented.

"I was sorry on my arrival to find you had left this city. Your present arduous undertaking, I easily conceive, demands retirement, and tho' we shall reap the fruits of it, I cannot help regretting the want of your abilities here where in the present moment they might, I think, be successfully employed. Parties still run very high—Common Sense would unite them. It is to be hoped therefore it has not abandoned us forever." *

Quite a number of letters passed between Paine and Franklin at this period. Paine wrote the aged philosopher on the last day of the year, describing a new invention of his, a smokeless candle, which embodied the principle destined later to be elaborated, and become known the world over as the "central draught burner." As will be seen, Paine's experiments were with candles and lamps. The idea of a tubular wick for an oil lamp, which was not adopted until more than a century later, does not seem to have occurred to him.

I saw a few years ago in Paris some candles made on the principle of Paine's candle, with passages for

* The original of this letter is in the collection of the Philosophical Society, Philadelphia.

air traversing its length. They were on sale in a grocery-shop, and I bought a few for the Paine Museum at New Rochelle. These candles were the candles of Thomas Paine brought into ordinary use a century and a quarter after Paine invented them and described the principle in his letter to Franklin.

This was what Paine wrote Franklin about the candle invention:

"Dec. 31, 1785.—Dear Sir,—I send you the candles I have been making;—In a little time after they are lighted the smoke and flame separate, the one issuing from one end of the candle, and the other from the other end. I suppose this to be because a quantity of air enters into the candle between the tallow and the flame, and in its passage downwards takes the smoke with it; for if you allow a quantity of air up the candle, the current will be changed, and the smoke reascends, and in passing this the flame makes a small flash and a little noise.

"But to express the idea I mean, of the smoke descending more clearly it is this,—that the air enters the candle in the very place where the melted tallow is getting into the state of flame, and takes it down before the change is completed—for there appears to me to be two kinds of smoke, humid matter which never can be flame, and enflameable matter which would be flame if some accident did not prevent the change being completed—and this I suppose to be the case with the descending smoke of the candle.

"As you can compare the candle with the lamp, you will have an opportunity of ascertaining the cause—why it will do in the one and not in the other. When the edge of the enflamed part of the wick is close with the edge of the tin of the lamp no counter current of air can enter—but as this contact does not take place in the candle a counter current enters and prevents the effect [?] in the candles which illuminates the lamp. For the passing of the air through the lamp does not, I imagine, burn the smoke, but burns up all the oil into flame, or by its rapidity prevents any part of the oil flying off in the state of half-flame which is smoke.

"I do not, my dear sir, offer these reasons to you but to myself, for I have often observed that by lending words for my thoughts I understand my thoughts the better. Thoughts are a kind of mental smoke, which require words to illuminate them.

"I am affectionately

"Your obt. and hble. servant,

"THOMAS PAINE.

"I hope to be well enough tomorrow to wait on you."

In the spring of 1786 Paine settled once more at Bordentown. There he passed a happy summer, with his friends, Colonel Kirkbride, Joseph Borden and John Hall, and he remained there most of the winter. His mind was principally on inventions, and Hall was able to assist him considerably in the planning and making of models.

In June two models of Paine's bridge being completed and the inventor eager to have Franklin see them, he sent them to Philadelphia in Hall's care. Hall carried this letter of introduction from Paine.

June 6th.—"The gentleman, Mr. Hall, who presents you with this letter, has the care of two models for a bridge, one of wood, the other of cast iron, which I have the pleasure of submitting to you, as well for the purpose of showing my respect to you, as my patron in this country, as for the sake of having your opinion and judgment thereon.—The European method of bridge architecture, by piers and arches, is not adapted to many of the rivers in America on account of the ice in the winter. The construction of those I have the honor of presenting to you is designed to obviate the difficulty by leaving the whole passage of the river clear of the incumbrance of piers. . . . My first design in the wooden model was for a bridge over the Harlem River, for my good friend General Morris of Morrisania . . . but I cannot help thinking that it might be carried across the Schuylkill. . . . Mr. Hall, who has been with me at Borden Town, and has done the chief share of the working part, for we have done the whole ourselves, will inform you of any circumstance relating to it which does not depend on the mathematical construction. Mr. Hall will undertake to see the models brought safe from the stage boat to you; they are too large to be admitted into the house, but will stand very well in the garden. Should there be a vessel going round to New York within about a week after my arrival in Philadelphia

I shall take that convenience for sending them there, at which place I hope to be in about a fortnight."

The following letter, also written in June, bears no address, but was, no doubt, sent to some member of the Pennsylvania Council who was interested in inventions:

"Honorable Sir,—I have sent to His Excellency, the President [Franklin] two models for a Bridge, the one of wood, the other of cast-iron bars, to be erected over rivers, without piers. As I shall in a few days go to New York, and take them with me, I do myself the honor of presenting an invitation to Council to take a view of them before they are removed. If it is convenient to Council to see and examine their construction to-day, at the usual time of their adjournment, I will attend at the President's at half after twelve o'clock, or any other day or hour Council may please to appoint."

That Paine was not unmindful of political matters while he was engrossed with his inventions is evidenced by the following letter to Hon. Thomas Fitzsimmons:

"To be left at the Bank, Philadelphia. Written at Bordentown, November 19th.

"Hon. Thomas Fitzsimmons—

"I write you a few loose thoughts as they occur to me. Next to gaining a majority is keeping it. This, at least

(in my opinion), will not be best accomplished by doing or attempting a great deal of business, but by doing no more than is absolutely necessary to be done, acting moderately and giving no offence. It is with the whole as it is with the members individually, and we always see at every new election that it is more difficult to turn out an old member against whom no direct complaint can be made than it is to put in a new one though a better man. I am sure it will be best not to touch any part of the plan of finance this year. If it falls short, as most probably it will, it would be (I speak for myself) best to reduce the interest that the whole body of those who are styled public creditors may share it equally as far as it will go. If any thing can be saved from the Civil List expenses it ought not to be finally mortgaged to make up the deficiency; it may be applied to bring the creditors to a balance for the present year. There is more to be said respecting this debt than has yet been said. The matter has never been taken up but by those who are interested in the matter. The public has been deficient and the claimants exorbitant —neglect on one side and greediness on the other. That which is truly Justice may be always advocated. But I could no more think of paying six per cent interest in real money, in perpetuity, for a debt a great part of which is quondam than I could think of not paying at all. Six per cent on any part of the debt, even to the original holders is ten or twelve per cent, and to the speculators twenty or thirty or more. It is better that the matter rest until it is fuller investigated and better understood, for in its present state it will be hazardous to touch upon.

"I have not heard a word of news from Philadelphia since I came to this place. I wrote a line to Mr. Francis and desired him to give me a little account of matters but he does not, perhaps, think it very necessary now.

"I see by the papers that the subject of the Bank is likely to be renewed. I should like to know when it will come on, as I have some thought of coming down at that time, if I can.

"I see by the papers that the Agricultural Society has presented a petition to the House respecting building a bridge over the Schuylkill—on a model prepared for that purpose. In this I think they are too hasty. I have already constructed a model of a bridge of cast iron, consisting of one arch. I am now making another of wrought iron of one arch, but on a different plan. I expect to finish it in about three weeks and shall send it first to Philadelphia. I have no opinion of any bridge over the Schuylkill that is to be erected on piers—the sinking of piers will sink more money than they have any idea of and will not stand when done. But there is another point they have not taken into their consideration; which is, that the sinking three piers in the middle of the river, large and powerful enough to resist the ice, will cause such an alteration in the bed and channel of the river that there is no saying what course it may take, or whether it will not force a new channel somewhere else."

Earlier in the year (May 19, 1786) Paine had written, from Bordentown, another letter to his friend Fitzsimmons, which was chiefly concerned with the

bridge he had designed and the models of it which he was sending to Dr. Franklin. In this letter he also discusses articles to be printed in the German newspapers, and in other publications. The letter, which has not been published heretofore, says in part:

"I do not recollect whether you saw my model of bridge to be formed of wood (the model—not the bridge,) to extend across a river without piers or piles; but I am now making one of cast-iron bars, which I have little or no doubt, may be carried over the Schuylkill. I expect to have the model finished in about two weeks, when I shall present it to Dr. Franklin, and come at the same time to Philadelphia. But, as I do not like to talk about a thing before it is done, I wish you not to mention it until I have completed it." *

George Clymer, one of Paine's oldest and staunchest friends in America, was the next recipient of a letter from Bordentown about the bridge. This is what Paine wrote Clymer:

To George Clymer, Esquire, "to be left at the Bank, Philadelphia." Written at Bordentown, November 19th.

"I observe by the minutes that the Agricultural Society have presented a petition to the House for an act of incorporation for the purpose of erecting a bridge over the

* In the collection of Robert J. Currier, Syracuse, N. Y.

Schuylkill on a model in their possession. I hope this business will not be gone into too hastily. A bridge on piers will never answer for that river, they may sink money but they never will sink piers that will stand. But admitting that the piers do stand—they will cause such an alteration in the bed and channel of the river, as will most probably alter its course either to divide the channel, and require two bridges or cause it to force a new channel in some other part. It is a matter of more hazard than they are aware of the altering by obstructions the bed and channel of a river; the water must go somewhere—the force of the freshets and the ice is very great now but will be much greater then.

"I am finishing as fast as I can my new model of an iron bridge of one arch which if it answers, and I have no doubt but it will, the whole difficulty of erecting bridges over that river, or others of like circumstances, will be removed, and the expense not greater, (and I believe not so great) as the sum mentioned by Mr. Morris in the house, and I am sure will stand four times as long or as much longer as iron is more durable than wood. I mention these circumstances to you that you may be informed of them—and not let the matter proceed so far as to put the Agricultural Society in a difficult situation at last.

"The giving a Society the exclusive right to build a bridge, unless the plan is prepared before hand, will prevent a bridge being built; because those who might afterwards produce models preferable to their own, will not present them to any such body of men, and they can have no right to take other peoples labors or inventions to complete their own undertakings by.

"I have not heard any news since I came to this place. I wish you would give me a line and let me know how matters are going on.—The stage boat comes to Bordentown every Wednesday and Sunday from the Crooked Billet Wharf."

Paine's mind was still keenly on a trans-Atlantic voyage, but he does not refer to it in his letters of 1786 to Clymer, Fitzsimmons, Franklin, Robert Morris, and others of his group of intimate friends. He had hoped the measures for his remuneration would enable him to visit England and France, and that he might see his aged parents. But a period of two years and a half had passed, and his financial condition was by no means improved. He had early in the year (1787) been in correspondence with his father and mother, who were still living in Thetford. It is known that he received an affectionate letter from his father, who had entered his 78th year. This letter, and other communications from his parents, were no doubt in Paine's trunk at the time of his death. This invaluable trunk, containing also Paine's correspondence with the most important figures of the American revolution, and unpublished manuscripts, fell into the hands of Madame Bonneville, Paine's executrix, and it was in all probability destroyed by fire in St. Louis,

Missouri, some time during the decade commencing 1870.

During the spring of 1787 Paine journeyed frequently from Bordentown to Philadelphia, where he had consultations with committees and friends. On March 31 he wrote Franklin the following letter about his plans and prospects, about his bridge and his anxiety to see his parents once more:

"I mentioned in one of my essays my design of going this spring to Europe.—I intend landing in France and from thence England,—and that I should take the model with me. The time I had fixed with myself was May, but understanding (since I saw you yesterday) that no French packet sails that month, I must either take the April packet or wait till June. As I can get ready by the April packet I intend not omitting the opportunity. My father and mother are yet living, whom I am very anxious to see, and have informed them of my coming over the ensuing summer.

"I suppose going from hence by the stage on Wednesday for New York, and shall be glad to be favored with the care of any letters of yours to France or England. My stay in Paris, when with Col. Laurens, was so short that I do not feel myself introduced there, for I was in no house but at Passy,* and the Hotel Col. Laurens was at. As I have taken a part in the revolution and politics of this country, and am not an unknown character in the political

* Franklin's residence in a suburb of Paris.—*Author.*

world, I conceive it would be proper on my going to Paris, that I should pay my respects to Count Vergennes, to whom I am personally unknown; and I shall be very glad of a letter from you to him affording me that opportunity, or rendering my waiting on him easy to me; for it so often happens that men live to forfeit the reputation at one time they gained at another, that it is prudent not to presume too much on one's self. The Marquis Lafayette I am the most known to of any gentleman in France. Should he be absent from Paris there are none I am much acquainted with. I am on exceeding good terms with Mr. Jefferson which will necessarily be the first place I go to. As I had the honor of your introduction to America it will add to my happiness to have the same friendship continued to me on the present occasion.

"Respecting the model, I shall be obliged to you for a letter to some of the commissioners in that department. I shall be glad to hear their opinion of it. If they will undertake the experiment of two ribs, it will decide the matter and promote the work here,—but this need not be mentioned. The Assembly have appointed another committee, consisting of Mr. Morris, Mr. Clymer, Mr. Fitzsimmons, Mr. Wheeler, Mr. Robinson, to confer with me on the undertaking. The matter therefore will remain suspended till my return next winter. It is worth awaiting this event, because if a single arch to that extent will answer, all difficulties in that river, or others of the same condition, are overcome at once. "I will do myself the pleasure of waiting on you to-morrow."

The committee in Philadelphia, entrusted with the consideration of Paine's bridge, and the feasibility

of its erection across the Schuylkill, for political or other reasons, deferred its decision so long that the members lost interest in it. In a report, rendered after Paine's departure for Europe, the committee approved the principles of construction but said little more.*

* In his "Nouv. Biog. Générale," M. Chanut asserts that Paine's bridge was not erected across the Schyulkill at Philadelphia, owing to "the imperfect state of iron manufacture in America."

CHAPTER XVI

The Return to Europe

Paine Sails for France....Sees Jefferson in Paris....Hastens to England to Visit His Parents....The French Academy Approves Paine's Bridge Model...."Prospects on the Rubison" Forecasts French Revolution....The Iron Bridge Rouses Interest in Sir Joseph Banks....Paine Labors for Peace Between France and England....Meets Edmund Burke....A Revealing Personal Letter.

WHEN Thomas Paine sailed for Europe in April, 1787, it was his intention to remain only one year. He spent there, instead of a single year, fifteen of the most eventful years that could possibly crowd themselves into any man's lifetime. He had been drawn to Europe very largely by an affectionate letter from his father, now well along in years, as was also his mother. He hoped to see both at least once more. The French packet upon which Paine sailed had a swift passage, and, upon reaching France in May, Paine went immediately to Paris, where he was received joyously by his old friend, Jefferson, who discussed with him the iron bridge, of which Paine was soon to show him a model.

There is a letter of Jefferson, U. S. Minister in Paris, to his friend, Benjamin Vaughan, dated July

2, 1787, in which we get the first tidings of Paine's bridge in Europe. Jefferson says:

"Mr. Paine (Common Sense) is here on his way to England. He has brought the model of an iron bridge, with which he supposes a single arch of four hundred feet may be made. It has not yet arrived in Paris."

Paine was, however, eager to visit England and see his parents in Thetford. He hurried over and was shocked to learn that his father had died before he embarked on his voyage across the ocean. But he found his mother still living, in her ninety-first year,* enjoying the comforts that money regularly transmitted by her none-too-affluent son ensured. Paine spent a good deal of the summer and part of the autumn with his mother. He found that she had become a devout Quaker, reacting from the creeds of the Church of England, and adopting her husband's religious beliefs. It is probable that Paine went with her to the old Quaker meeting-house in Thetford, to which, in her declining years, she had become greatly attached.

What vivid memories the distinguished writer must have had of his childhood days in Thetford, of the ivy-grown meeting-house, unchanged through the

* Paine's mother lived to the age of 94; his father died at 78.

long years, of the solemn gatherings he had seen in the old building, of the grave "testimonies" he here heard, and a myriad other recollections!

While he was in Thetford Jefferson wrote Paine asking him to sit for his portrait, whether for Jefferson's personal collection or for a public institution is not revealed.

And Paine replied:

"I am much obliged to you for the book you are so kind as to send me. The second part of your letter, concerning taking my picture, I must feel as an honor done to me, not as a favor asked of me—but in this, as in other matters, I am at the disposal of your friendship.

"The committee have among themselves finally agreed on their report; I saw this morning it will be read in the Academy on Wednesday. The report goes pretty fully to support the principles of the construction, with their reasons for that opinion."

While Paine's letter has survived, Jefferson's seems to have disappeared. If a painting was made of Paine in either London or Paris in 1787 or 1788, there is no record of it.

Paine's good friend, George Clymer, in Philadelphia, was not forgotten by the traveller. Paine wrote Clymer on August 15 from Paris. His letter shows that Paine's revolutionary project of an iron bridge

spanning several hundred feet, quite staggered the savants of the Academy of Sciences! The letter follows:

"This comes by Mr. Derby, of Massachusetts, who leaves Paris to-day to take shipping at L'Orient for Boston. The enclosed for Dr. Franklin is from his friend Mr. Le Roy, of the Academy of Sciences, respecting the bridge, and the causes that have delayed the completing the report. An arch of 4 or 5 hundred feet is such an unprecedented thing, and will so much attract notice in the northern part of Europe, that the Academy is cautious in what manner to express their final opinion. It is, I find, their custom to give reasons for their opinion, and this embarrasses them more than the opinion itself. That the model is strong, and that a bridge constructed on the same principles will also be strong, they appear to be well agreed in, but to what particular causes to assign the strength they are not agreed in. The committee was directed by the Academy to examine all the models and plans for iron bridges that had been proposed in France, and they unanimously gave the preference to our own, as being the simplest, strongest, and lightest. They have likewise agreed on some material points."

During this visit to Paris Paine met eminent Frenchmen, such as Condorcet, Danton, Cardinal De Brienne and Duchatelet. Paine wrote at this time his pamphlet "Prospects on the Rubicon" (Vol. IV, p. 321). The date at the end, August 20, 1787, is

doubtless the date when Paine finished his manuscript, but it is probable that he revised the proofs in his mother's home in Thetford, and that he then added further text to the proofs, and also gave his London address, "York Street, St. James Square." Paine in this pamphlet, which was the first he had printed in Europe,* included a striking forecast concerning events with which the French mind was then pregnant. Dr. Robinet quotes Paine's "Rubicon" in his "Danton Emigré." In this work he asserts that Paine, like Danton, and some of the other French luminaries of that period, was a Freemason.

Paine was the author of an interesting and highly instructive treatise on the origin of freemasonry (see Vol. IX, p. 167) but, although many of his circle of friends were undoubtedly members of that order, no conclusive proof has ever been adduced that Paine was a Mason.

Paine sent to Sir Joseph Banks, president of the Royal Society, his model of the bridge, which had been approved by the Academy in Paris. Sir Joseph wrote Paine expressing "great satisfaction," and added, "I expect many improvements from your countrymen, who think with vigor and are in a great

* Paine's pamphlet "The Case of the Officers of Excise" was merely a petition to Parliament in 1772. It was not published until 1793. (See Vol. X, p. 327.)—*Author.*

measure free from those shackles of theory which are imposed on the minds of our people before they are capable of exerting their mental faculties to advantage."

Paine drafted a proposal for peace and friendship between England and France, and submitted it to the Cardinal Minister, De Brienne, who approving the paper, signed his endorsement of it. Paine personally carried the proposal of amity between England and France to Edmund Burke.

Paine was at all times the apostle of peace and the avowed enemy of war. Only in defense of liberty, such as the struggle of the colonists for American independence, was Paine's pen ever employed in advocacy of any war. A war for objects other than the repulsion of invaders and aggressors was extremely repugnant to him.

The following letter, never published heretofore, from Thomas Paine to his old friend, George Clymer, is probably the last letter written by Paine while in Paris in 1787. It contains some interesting allusions to John Adams:

"Paris, December 29, 1787.

"Dear Sir:

"I received your favor of . . . when at London, from which place I returned about a fortnight since. I am

obliged to you for the account you gave me of the steamboat, the bridge and the plan of the newly proposed Constitution. There are many excellent things in the new system—I perceive the difficulties you must have found in debating on certain points, such as trial by juries, because in some cases, such for instance, as that of the United States against any particular State, if the trial is to be held in the delinquent State, a jury composed from that State, would be a part of the deliquent, and consequently judges in their own case.

"It seems a wish with all the Americans on this side the water, except Mr. John Adams, that the President-General has not been perpetually eligible. Mr. Adams, who has some strange ideas, finds fault because the President is not for life, and because the Presidency does not devolve by hereditary succession. Too long a continuance in the presidency would probably introduce some attempt at foreign influence, such as that in Poland and Holland.

"The Academy of Sciences presented me their report on the model the twenty-ninth of August. I went to London the day after, and intended sending you a copy from thence, as I shall reserve the original to bring with me. The Academy has given the same opinion as we formed in Philadelphia. The report recommends the execution of the work, with their reasons upon which that opinion is founded. While I was in London Mr. Beaumarchais has been applying for a patent or privilege for erecting an iron bridge over the Seine, opposite the King's Gardens, where the river is wider than at the middle.

The model is at present in London in charge of Sir Joseph Banks.

"But it is very possible that after all the pains I have taken, and the money I have expended, that some counter-working project will set itself up, and the hope of great gain, or great interest, will attempt schemes, that after some less pains will end in no bridge at all.

"Just after I got to London the tumults of war began. The viciousness of that nation (Great Britain)—is inconceivable. They supposed France unprepared for war, and her attention engrossed by domestic circumstances. And this was reason enough for England to go to war!

"But a great deal of this kind of cowardly bravery has disappeared since England has discovered that a treaty is in a probable train of execution between Russia, the Emperor (of Austria,) France and Spain. The probability of this Quadruple Alliance already extends to retard the progress of a treaty proposed by England with Russia and Holland, so that it is likely John Bull will be at last left in the lurch.

"I intend staying here until the Spring, and embarking for America in the April or May packet. This letter will probably reach you soon enough to send me a little news. Remember me with much affection to my friends around you.

"Your much obliged and obt. hble. servt.,

"THOMAS PAINE.

"Geo. Clymer, Esquire."

Paine and Jefferson had many important conversations in Paris. Their talks were, of course, chiefly on the subject of government. Jefferson was anxious

that the American Constitution should include a Declaration of Rights and expressed himself vehemently in its favor. Paine was equally ardent in its advocacy. Their efforts in behalf of a bill of rights to safeguard the interests of the people were, alas! fruitless. Jefferson wrote Paine some comments on the argument of James Wilson,* who claimed that a Declaration of Rights was unnecessary in a government without any powers not definitely granted. He asserted that such a declaration might be interpreted as implying "some degree of power over the matters it defined." It is claimed that Wilson's beliefs were more in agreement with those of Paine than with Jefferson's ideas. This letter from Paine to Jefferson, bearing no date, was probably written at Thetford in 1788:

"After I got home, being alone and wanting amusement, I sat down to explain to myself (for there is such a thing) my ideas of national and civil rights, and the distinction between them. I send them to you to see how nearly we agree.

"Suppose twenty persons, strangers to each other, to meet in a country not before inhabited. Each would be a sovereign in his own natural right. His will would be his law, but his power, in many cases, inadequate to his

* Wilson was later (1789-1798) a justice of the U. S. Supreme Court.

right; and the consequence would be that each might be exposed, not only to each other, but to the other nineteen. It would then occur to them that their condition would be much improved, if a way could be devised to exchange that quantity of danger into so much protection; so that each individual should possess the strength of the whole number. As all their rights in the first case are natural rights, and the exercise of those rights supported only by their own natural individual power, they would begin by distinguishing between those rights they could individually exercise, fully and perfectly, and those they could not. Of the first kind are the rights of thinking, speaking, forming and giving opinions, and perhaps are those which can be fully exercised by the individual without the aid of exterior assistance; or in other words, rights of personal competency. Of the second kind are those of personal protection, of acquiring and possessing property, in the exercise of which the individual natural power is less than the natural right.

"Having drawn this line they agree to retain individually the first class of rights, or those of personal competency; and to detach from their personal possession the second class, or those of defective power, and to accept in lieu thereof a right to the whole power produced by a condensation of all the parts. These I conceive to be civil rights, or rights of compact, and are distinguishable from natural rights because in the one we act wholly in our own person, in the other we agree not to do so, but act under the guarantee of society.

"It therefore follows that the more of those imperfect natural rights or rights of imperfect power we give up,

and thus exchange, the more security we possess; and as the word liberty is often mistakenly put for security, Mr. Wilson has confused his argument by confounding the terms. But it does not follow that the more natural rights of *every kind* we assign the more security we possess, because if we resign those of the first class we may suffer much by the exchange; for where the right and the power are equal with each other in the individual, naturally, they ought to rest there.

"Mr. Wilson must have some allusion to this distinction, or his position would be subject to the inference you draw from it.

"I consider the individual sovereignty of the States retained under the act of confederation to be of the second class of right. It becomes dangerous because it is defective in the power necessary to support it. It answers the pride and purpose of a few men in each State, but the State collectively is injured by it."

A delightfully tender and exceptionally interesting letter was written by Paine, in London, at the beginning of the new year, to his charming young friend, Kitty Nicholson, who was one of the girls attending the school at Bordentown. Paine had known her there and in New York, and his letter was in reply to her announcement of her marriage to Colonel Few. No letter of Paine is more self-revealing. One need not seek further for the inmost heart of Thomas Paine. This is Paine's letter to Mrs. Few:

"London, January 6, 1789.

"I sincerely thank you for your very friendly and welcome letter. I was in the country when it arrived and did not receive it soon enough to answer it by the return of the vessel.

"I very affectionately congratulate Mr. and Mrs. Few on their happy marriage, and every branch of the families allied by that connection; and I request my fair correspondent to present me to her partner, and to say, for me, that he has obtained one of the highest prizes on the wheel. Besides the pleasure which your letter gives me to hear you are all happy and well, it relieves me from a sensation not easy to be dismissed; and if you will excuse a few dull thoughts for obtruding themselves into a congratulatory letter I will tell you what it is. When I see my female friends drop off by matrimony I am sensible of something that affects me like a loss in spite of all the appearances of joy: I cannot help mixing the sincere compliment of regret with that of congratulation. It appears as if I had outlived or lost a friend. It seems to me as if the original was no more, and that which she is changed to forsakes the circle and forgets the scenes of former society. Felicities are cares superior to those she formerly cared for, create to her a new landscape of life that excludes the little friendships of the past. It is not every lady's mind that is sufficiently capacious to prevent those greater objects crowding out the less, or that can spare a thought to former friendships after she has given her hand and heart to the man who loves her. But the sentiment your letter contains has prevented these dull ideas from mixing with the congratulation I present you, and is

so congenial with the enlarged opinion I have always formed of you, that at the time I read your letter with pleasure I read it with pride, because it convinces me that I have some judgment in that most difficult science—a lady's mind. Most sincerely do I wish you all the good that heaven can bless you with, and as you have in your own family an example of domestic happiness you are already in the knowledge of obtaining it. That no condition we can enjoy is an exemption from care—that some shade will mingle itself with the brightest sunshine of life —that even our affections may become the instruments of our sorrows—that the sweet felicities of home depend on good temper as well as on good sense, and that there is always something to forgive even in the nearest and dearest of our friends,—are truths which, tho' too obvious to be told, ought never to be forgotten; and I know you will not esteem my friendship the less for impressing them upon you.

"Though I appear a sort of wanderer, the married state has not a sincerer friend than I am. It is the harbor of human life, and is, with respect to the things of this world, what the next world is to this. It is home; and that one word conveys more than any other word can express. For a few years we may glide along the tide of youthful single life and be wonderfully delighted; but it is a tide that flows but once, and what is still worse, it ebbs faster than it flows, and leaves many a hapless voyager aground. I am one, you see, that have experienced the fate I am describing. I have lost my tide; it passed by while every thought of my heart was on the wing for the salvation of my dear America, and I have now, as contentedly as I can, made

myself a little bower of willows on the shore that has the solitary resemblance of a home. Should I always continue the tenant of this home, I hope my female acquaintance will ever remember that it contains not the churlish enemy of their sex, not the inaccessible cold hearted mortal, nor the capricious tempered oddity, but one of the best and most affectionate of their friends.

"I did not forget the Dunstable hat, but it was not on wear here when I arrived. That I am a negligent correspondent I freely confess, and I always reproach myself for it. You mention only one letter, but I wrote twice; once by Dr. Derby, and another time by the Chevalier St. Triss—by whom I also wrote to Gen. Morris, Col. Kirkbride, and several friends in Philadelphia, but have received no answers. I had one letter from Gen. Morris last winter, which is all I have received from New York till the arrival of yours.

"I thank you for the details of news you give. Kiss Molly Field for me and wish her joy,—and all the good girls of Bordentown. How is my favorite Sally Morris, my boy Joe, and my horse Button? pray let me know. Polly and Nancy Rogers,—are they married? or do they intend to build bowers as I have done? If they do, I wish they would twist their green willows somewhere near to mine.

"I am very much engaged here about my bridge—There is one building of my construction at Messrs. Walker's Iron Works in Yorkshire, and I have direction of it. I am lately come from thence and shall return again in two or three weeks.

"As to news on this side the water, the King is mad, and there is great bustle about appointing a Regent. As it happens, I am in pretty close intimacy with the heads of the opposition—the Duke of Portland, Mr. Fox and Mr. Burke. I have sent your letter to Mrs. Burke as a specimen of the accomplishments of the American ladies. I sent it to Miss Alexander, a lady you have heard me speak of, and I asked her to give me a few of her thoughts how to answer it. She told me to write as I felt, and I have followed her advice.

"I very kindly thank you for your friendly invitation to Georgia and if I am ever within a thousand miles of you, I will come and see you; though it be but for a day.

"You touch me on a very tender part when you say my friends on your side the water 'cannot be reconciled to the idea of my resigning my adopted America, even for my native England.' They are right. Though I am in as elegant style of acquaintance here as any American that ever came over, my heart and myself are 3000 miles apart; and I had rather see my horse Button in his own stable, or eating the grass of Bordentown or Morrisania, than see all the pomp and show of Europe.

"A thousand years hence (for I must indulge in a few thoughts), perhaps in less, America may be what England now is! The innocence of her character that won the hearts of all nations in her favor may sound like a romance, and her inimitable virtue as if it had never been. The ruins of that liberty which thousands bled for, or suffered to obtain, may just furnish materials for a village tale or extort a sigh from rustic sensibility, while the

fashionable of that day, enveloped in dissipation, shall deride the principle and deny the fact.

"When we contemplate the fall of empires and the extinction of nations of the ancient world, we see but little to excite our regret than the mouldering ruins of pompous palaces, magnificent monuments, lofty pyramids, and walls and towers of the most costly workmanship. But when the empire of America shall fall, the subject for contemplative sorrow will be infinitely greater than crumbling brass or marble can inspire. It will not then be said, here stood a temple of vast antiquity,—here rose a Babel of invisible height, or there a palace of sumptuous extravagance; but here, ah painful thought! the noblest work of human wisdom, the grandest scene of human glory, the fair cause of freedom rose and fell!

"Read this and then ask if I forget America—But I'll not be dull if I can help it, so I leave off, and close my letter to-morrow, which is the day the mail is made up for America.

"January 7th. I have heard this morning with extreme concern of the death of our worthy friend Capt. Read. Mrs. Reed lives in a house of mine at Bordentown, and you will much oblige me by telling her how much I am affected by her loss; and to mention to her, with that delicacy which such an offer and her situation require, and which no one knows better how to convey than yourself, that the two years' rent which is due I request her to accept of, and to consider herself at home till she hears further from me.

"This is the severest winter I ever knew in England; the frost has continued upwards of five weeks, and is still

likely to continue. All the vessels from America have been kept off by contrary winds. The 'Polly' and the 'Pigeon' from Philadelphia and the 'Eagle' from Charleston are just got in.

"If you should leave New York before I arrive (which I hope will not be the case) and should pass through Philadelphia, I wish you would me the favor to present my compliments to Mrs. Powell, the lady whom I wanted an opportunity to introduce you to when you were in Philadelphia, but was prevented by your being at a house where I did not visit.

"There is a Quaker favorite of mine at New York, formerly Miss Watson of Philadelphia; she is now married to Dr. Lawrence, and is an acquaintance of Mrs. Oswald: be so kind as to make her a visit for me. You will like her conversation. She has a little of the Quaker primness—but of the pleasing kind—about her.

"I am always distressed at closing a letter, because it seems like taking leave of my friends after a parting conversation.—Captain Nicholson, Mrs. Nicholson, Hannah, Fanny, James, and the little ones, and you my dear Kitty, and your partner for life—God bless you all! and send me safe back to my much loved America!

"Thomas Paine—æt. 52.
"or if you better like it
" 'Common Sense.'

"This comes by the packet which sails from Falmouth, 300 miles from London; but by the first vessel from London to New York I will send you some magazines. In the meantime be so kind as to write to me by the first

opportunity. Remember me to the family at Morrisania, and all my friends at New York and Bordentown. Desire Gen. Morris to take another guinea of Mr. Constable, who has some money of mine in his hands, and give it to my boy Joe. Tell Sally to take care of 'Button.' Then direct for me at Mr. Peter Whiteside's London. When you are at Charleston remember me to my dear old friend Mrs. Lawrence, Col. and Mrs. L. Morris, and Col. Washington; and at Georgia, to Col. Walton. Adieu."

CHAPTER XVII

An Inventive Genius

The Iron Bridge Patented....Ingenuities of Construction and Design....Suggested Peaceful Use for Gunpowder....The Germ Idea of Modern Internal Combustion Engines....A Planing Machine....Application of Steam for Propulsion of Ships....Paine's Iron Bridge is Built....His Popularity.

THOMAS PAINE was distinctly an inventor, an originator of entirely new projects, not only in politics but in mechanical contrivances as well.

Joel Barlow, who knew Paine well, wrote: "The biographers of Paine should not forget his mathematical acquirements and his mechanical genius." Both were of a very high order, and Barlow has done well to emphasize Paine's abilities in both these directions. Certainly Paine's ingenuity in the contrivance of mechanical devices should not be overlooked in the dazzling light of his political and literary accomplishments.

What proportion of the vast number of persons crossing the world's great suspension bridges today *

* To mention the bridges of but a single city, statistics show that an average of more than one million persons cross the bridges connecting New York and Brooklyn every day of the year.

are aware that Thomas Paine invented the iron bridge which supplanted the stone and wooden structures, which were the only bridges in Paine's day?

The iron bridge has been replaced by the steel bridge, it is true, but the transmutation of iron into steel, which came long after the era of Thomas Paine, made, of course, no change in the basic principle underlying Paine's invention.

In the patent granted Paine by the British government of "His most Excellent Majesty, King George III," on August 26, 1788, Paine describes the bridge, (Patent No. 1667).

He says in the specification that

"The idea and construction of this arch is taken from the figure of a spider's circular web, of which it resembles a section, and from a conviction that when nature empowered this insect to make a web she also instructed her in the strongest mechanical method of constructing it. Another idea, taken from nature in the construction of this arch, is that of increasing the strength of matter by dividing and combining it, and thereby causing it to act over a larger space than it would occupy in a solid state, as is seen in the quills of birds, bones of animals, reeds, canes, &c. The curved bars of the arch are composed of pieces of any length joined together to the whole extent of the arch, and take curvature by bending."

The network of cables supporting the Brooklyn bridge gives the impression of a spider's web, and the designers of this modern bridge, erected in the latter part of the nineteenth century, had either seen Paine's description, or the ingenious construction on the lines of the spider web described by Paine was fortuitously adopted without reference to Paine's work.

It is, indeed, interesting and ironic to think of George III granting a patent to the man who invented the modern Republic, and who was as responsible as himself for "the principal jewel in the British crown" (America) "dropping out at his coronation!"

Paine, with his detestation of war as a means of settling disputes between nations and as a means of aggrandizement, hoped that some better use might be found for gunpowder than its employment solely for the purposes of wholesale murder. He wrote the following regarding gunpowder:

"When I consider the wisdom of nature I must think that she endowed matter with this extraordinary property for other purposes than that of destruction. Poisons are capable of other uses than that of killing. If the power which an ounce of gunpowder contains could be detailed out as steam or water can be it would be a most commodious natural power."

Later Paine suggested the applicability of successive small explosions of gunpowder on the periphery of a wheel for the purpose of producing rotation. Here is the germ of the idea of the automobile motor of the present day, and Paine is revealed as thinking a hundred years ahead of his time in mechanics.

Besides these ingenious contrivances Paine invented a planing machine at a time when all planing and other work with wood was done by hand, a new and improved crane, the smokeless candle, his wheel of concentric rim and other devices previously mentioned. The iron bridge was, no doubt, the most important of Paine's inventions, and he, himself, seems to have so regarded it. It is mentioned in many of his letters to Jefferson, Franklin, Clymer and others of his circle of intimate friends.

Paine was one of the inventors of the steamboat. William Henry, Jr., an eminent engineer, of Lancaster, Pa., at whose house in that city, Paine wrote "Crisis V," addressed to General Howe, left papers in which he told of Paine explaining to him the method by which steam could be applied to navigation. Sir Richard Phillips, who assisted Fulton in his steamboat experiments on the Thames, credits Paine with priority in the application of steam to

navigation. He had probably learned about Paine's labors in this direction from Fulton, who was one of Paine's friends. In the controversy between Fitch and Rumsey, Paine's priority to both was conceded. Fitch publicly expressed his obligations to Paine. Paine's plan for a steamboat contemplated a turbine application of steam to a wheel. It is interesting to note that all four inventors of the steamboat, Paine, Fitch, Rumsey and Fulton, conducting their experiments independently, were close personal friends.

One of the four inventors, Fulton, who labored on the application of steam to navigation, received all the credit. The others are practically unknown as inventors.

Paine's iron bridge was built in 1789 at the famous iron works of the Messrs. Walker, at Rotherham, in Yorkshire, England. A special workship was fitted up for Paine, and there he was visited by famous English and French engineers. In both Rotherham and London the bridge inventor was lionized, quite as Franklin had been honored in Paris. There were eminent visitors, too, at the iron works whose fame rested on their literary and political laurels. Others, too, there were of the aristocracy and even the nobility.

Paine was very popular at the iron works. Thomas A. Edison,* a life-long admirer of Thomas Paine, states that an English machinist, one of his employees, informed him forty years ago that he had worked in the machine-shop where Paine's bridge was made. The workmen at that shop had held Paine in such high esteem for his many generous acts that they had set apart an anvil Paine had used, and surrounded it with a railing which bore a commemorative tablet expressing their appreciation of Paine's kindnesses. Paine was a very kind man. The record of his life proves it, and the men in the iron-works at Rotherham testified to their affection for the great man by the erection of this touching tribute.

There are many memories of Paine still cherished at Rotherham, and, besides the anvil which Paine himself used, there have been carefully preserved several of his tools.

The following letter, never published heretofore, from Thomas Paine to some unknown person, probably in London, extends a cordial invitation to visit the iron-works, where the "experiment rib" of the bridge has been erected.

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* Mr. Edison is First Vice-President of the Thomas Paine National Historical Association, New York.

"Rotherham, May 1, 1789.

"Sir:

"We have erected our experiment rib, and struck the center. The Messrs. Walker join me in compliments, and an invitation to you to come and survey our handiwork. Please favor me with a line when we may expect you, that I may not be out of the way.

"I am, Sir,

"Your obed't Humble Serv't,

"THOMAS PAINE."

I have seen only one other letter written by Paine at Rotherham in which the bridge is mentioned. This is a letter to Jefferson in Paris:

"ROTHERHAM, YORKSHIRE, July 13.—The Walkers are to find all the materials, and fit and frame them ready for erecting, put them on board a vessel and send them to London. I am to undertake all expense from that time and to complete the erecting. We intend first to exhibit it and afterwards put it up to sale, or dispose of it by private contract, and after paying the expenses of each party the remainder to be equally divided—one half theirs, the other mine. My principal object in this plan is to open the way for a bridge over the Thames. . . . I shall now have occasion to draw upon some funds I have in America. I have one thousand dollars stock in the Bank at Philadelphia, and two years interest due upon it last April, £180 in the hands of General Morris; £40 with Mr. Constable of New York; a house at Bordentown, and a farm

at New Rochelle. The stock and interest in the bank, which Mr. Willing manages for me, is the easiest negotiated, and full sufficient for what I shall want. On this fund I have drawn fifteen guineas payable to Mr. Trumbull, tho' I shall not want the money longer than till the exhibition and sale of the bridge. I had rather draw than ask to borrow of any body here.

"If you go to America this year I shall be very glad if you can manage this matter for me, by giving me credit for two hundred pounds, on London, and receiving that amount of Mr. Willing. I am not acquainted with the method of negotiating money matters, but if you can accommodate me in this, and will direct me how the transfer is to be made, I shall be much obliged to you. Please direct to me under cover to Mr. Trumbull. I have some thoughts of coming over to France for two or three weeks, as I shall have little to do here until the bridge is ready for erecting.

CHAPTER XVIII

Confidential Letters to Jefferson, 1788-89

Insanity of George III....A Week With Edmund Burke.... Talk of a Regency....Intimacy With Burke....Mr. Pitt and Parliament....The King Improves in Health....Where to Fight England.

PAINE'S confidential letters to his intimate friend, Jefferson, then the U. S. Minister to France, were written from London in the years 1788 and 1789. They contain a good deal of important supplementary information about the construction of the bridge and also some interesting news of political matters in England. In one of the letters Paine mentions the insanity of the king, George III, with whose malady Paine says he believes Jefferson is already cognizant. In another letter he mentions spending a week at the country home of Edmund Burke, whose book in defense of monarchy had not yet been written, nor, of course, Paine's brilliant reply, "Rights of Man."

Since the return of Adams to America Jefferson received little information, upon which he felt he could rely, about affairs in England, and Paine was in a position to supply him with news he desired. He had written Paine: "I have great confidence in your

communications, and since Mr. Adams' departure I am in need of authentic information from that country." Their great friendship is evidenced by the way in which Jefferson subscribes his letters to Paine: "I am, with great and sincere attachment, dear sir, your affectionate friend and servant." Should a critic believe that in Paine's letters he detects any note of egotism, he may be reminded that the letters are confidential communications from a very intimate friend. The letters were not intended for any eyes but Jefferson's.

These are Paine's letters:

"London, Broad Street Buildings, No. 13. Sept. 9, 1788.—That I am a bad correspondent is so general a complaint against me, that I must expect the same accusation from you—But hear me first—When there is no matter to write upon, a letter is not worth the trouble of receiving and reading, and while any thing which is to be the subject of a letter is in suspense, it is difficult to write and perhaps best to let it alone—'least said is soonest mended,' and nothing said requires no mending.

"The model has the good fortune of preserving in England the reputation which it received from the Academy of Sciences. It is a favorite hobby horse with all who have seen it; and every one who has talked with me on the subject advised me to endeavor to obtain a Patent, as it is only by that means that I can secure to myself the

direction and management. For this purpose I went, in company with Mr. Whiteside to the office which is an appendage to Lord Sydney's—told them who I was, and made an affidavit that the construction was my own invention. This was the only step I took in the business. Last Wednesday I received a patent for England, the next day a patent for Scotland, and I am to have one for Ireland.

"As I had already the opinion of the scientific judges both in France and England on the model, it was also necessary that I should have that of the practical iron men who must finally be the executors of the work. There are several capital iron works in this country, the principal of which are those in Shropshire, Yorkshire, and Scotland. It was my intention to have communicated with Mr. Wilkinson, who is one of the proprietors of the Shropshire Iron Works, and concerned in those in France, but his departure for Sweden before I had possession of the patents prevented me. The iron works in Yorkshire belonging to the Walkers near to Sheffield are the most eminent in England in point of establishment and property. The proprietors are reputed to be worth two hundred thousand pounds and consequently capable of giving energy to any great undertaking. A friend of theirs who had seen the model wrote to them on the subject, and two of them came to London last Friday to see it and talk with me on the business. Their opinion is very decided that it can be executed either in wrought or cast iron, and I am to go down to their works next week to erect an experiment arch. This is the point I am now got to, and until now I had nothing to inform you of. If I succeed in erecting the arch all reasoning and opinion will be at an end, and, as this will

soon be known, I shall not return to France till that time; and until then I wish every thing to remain respecting my bridge over the Seine, in the state I left matters in when I came from France. With respect to the patents in England it is my intention to dispose of them as soon as I have established the certainty of the construction.

"Besides the ill success of Blackfriars Bridge, two bridges built successively on the same spot, the last by Mr. Smeaton, at Hexham, over the Tyne in Northumberland, have fallen down, occasioned by quicksands under the bed of the river. If therefore arches can be extended in the proportion the model promises, the construction in certain situations, without regard to cheapness or dearness, will be valuable in all countries. . . . As to English news or politics, there is little more than what the public papers contain. The assembling the States General, and the reappointment of Mr. Neckar, made considerable impression here. They overawe a great deal of the English habitual rashness, and check that triumph of presumption which they indulged themselves in with respect to what they called the deranged and almost ruinous condition of the finances of France. They acknowledge unreservedly that the natural resources of France are greater than those of England, but they plume themselves on the superiority of the means necessary to bring national resources forth. But the two circumstances above mentioned serve very well to lower this exaltation.

"Some time ago I spent a week at Mr. Burke's, and the Duke of Portland's in Buckinghamshire. You will recollect that the Duke was the member during the time of the coalition—he is now in the opposition, and I find the oppo-

sition as much warped in some respects as to continental politics as the Ministry.—What the extent of the treaty with Russia is, Mr. B[urke] says that he and all the opposition are totally unacquainted with; and they speak of it not as a very wise measure, but rather tending to involve England in unnecessary continental disputes. The preference of the opposition is to a connection with Prussia if it could have been obtained. Sir George Staunton tells me that the interference with respect to Holland last year met with considerable opposition from part of the Cabinet. Mr. Pitt was against it at first, but it was a favorite measure with the King, and that the opposition at that crisis contrived to have it known to him that they were disposed to support his measures. This together with the notification of the 16th of September gave Mr. Pitt cause and pretence for changing his ground.

"The Marquis of Landsdown is unconnected either with the Ministry or the opposition. His politics is distinct from both. His plan is a sort of armed neutrality which has many advocates. In conversation with me he reprobated the conduct of the Ministry towards France last year as operating to '*cut the throat of confidence*' (this was his expression) between France and England at a time when there was a fair opportunity of improving it.

"The enmity of this country against Russia is as bitter as it ever was against America, and is carried to every pitch of abuse and vulgarity. What I hear in conversations exceeds what may be seen in the news-papers. They are sour and mortified at every success she acquires, and voraciously believe and rejoice in the most improbable

accounts and rumors to the contrary. You may mention this to Mr. Simelin on any terms you please for you cannot exceed the fact.

"There are those who amuse themselves here in the hopes of managing Spain. The notification which the Marquis del Campo made last year to the British Cabinet, is perhaps the only secret kept in this country. Mr. B[urke] tells me that the opposition knows nothing of it. They all very freely admit that if the combined fleets had had thirty or forty thousand land forces, when they came up the channel last war, there was nothing in England to oppose their landing, and that such a measure would have been fatal to their resources, by at least a temporary destruction of national credit. This is the point on which this country is most impressible. Wars carried on at a distance, they care but little about, and seem always disposed to enter into them. It is bringing the matter home to them that makes them fear and feel, for their weakest part is at home. This I take to be the reason of the attention they are paying to Spain; for while France and Spain make a common cause and *start* together, they may easily overawe this country.

"I intended sending this letter by Mr. Parker, but he goes by way of Holland, and as I do not choose to send it by the English post, I shall desire Mr. Bartholemy to forward it to you.

"Remember me with much affection to the Marquis de Lafayette. This letter will serve for two letters. Whether I am in London or the country any letter to me at Mr. Whiteside's, Merchant, No. 13 Broad Street Buildings, will come safe. My compliments to Mr. Short."

"LONDON, September 15.—I have not heard of Mr. [Lewis] Littlepage since I left Paris,—if you have, I shall be glad to know it. As he dined sometimes at Mr. Neckar's, he undertook to describe the Bridge to him. Mr. Neckar very readily conceived it. If you have an opportunity of seeing Mr. Neckar, and see it convenient to renew the subject, you might mention that I am going forward with an experiment arch.—Mr. Le Couteulx desired me to examine the construction of the Albion Steam Mills erected by Bolton and Watt. I have not yet written to him because I had nothing certain to write about. I have talked with Mr. Rumsey, who is here, upon this matter, and who appears to me to be master of that subject, and who has procured a model of the Mill, which is worked originally from the steam. . . . When you see Mr. Le Roy please to present my compliments. I hope to realize the opinion of the Academy on the Model, in which case I shall give the Academy the proper information. We have no certain accounts here of the arrangement of the new Ministry. The papers mention Count St. Preist for Foreign Affairs. When you see him please to present my compliments. . . . Please to present my compliments to M. and Madame de Corney."

"LONDON, December 16.—That the King is insane is now old news. He yet continues in the same state, and the Parliament are on the business of appointing a Regent. The Dukes of York and Gloucester have both made speeches in the house of Peers. An embarrassing question, whether the Prince of Wales has a right in himself by succession during the incapacity of his father, or whether the right must derive to him thro' Parliament,

has been agitated in both Houses. [Illegible] and the speeches of York and Gloucester of avoiding the question. This day is fixed for bringing the matter on in the house of Commons. A change of Ministry is expected, and I believe determined on. The Duke of Portland and his friends will in all probability come in. I shall be exceedingly glad to hear from you, and to know if you have received my letters, and also when you intend setting off for America, or whether you intend to visit England before you go. In case of change of Ministry here there are certain matters I shall be glad to see you upon. Remember me to the Marquis de Lafayette. We hear good things from France, and I sincerely wish them all well and happy. Remember me to Mr. Short and Mr. Mazzei."

"London, Jan. 15, 1789.—My last letter requested to know if you had any thoughts of coming to England before you sailed to America. There will certainly be a change of Ministry, and probably some change of measures, and it might not be inconvenient if you could know before your sailing, for the information of the new Congress, what measures the new Ministry here intended to pursue or adopt with respect to commercial arrangements with America. I am in some intimacy with Mr. Burke, and after the new Ministry are formed he has proposed to introduce me to them. The Duke of Portland, at whose seat in the country I was a few days last summer, will be at the head of the Treasury, and Mr. Fox Secretary for Foreign Affairs. The King continues, I believe, as mad as ever. It appears that he has amassed several millions of money, great part of which is in foreign funds. He had made a Will, while he had his senses, and devised it

among his children, but a second Will has been produced, made since he was mad, dated the 25th of Oct., in which he gives his property to the Queen. This will probably produce much dispute, and it is attended with many suspicious circumstances. It came out in the examination of the physicians, that one of them, Dr. Warrens, on being asked the particular time of his observing the King's insanity, said the twenty-second of October, and some influence has been exerted to induce him to retract that declaration, or to say that the insanity was not so much as to prevent him making a Will, which he has refused to do."

"LONDON, February 16.—Your favor of the 23d December continued to the —— of Janry. came safe to hand,—for which I thank you. I begin this without knowing of any opportunity of conveyance, and shall follow the method of your letter by writing on till an opportunity offers.

"I thank you for the many and judicious observations about my bridge. I am exactly in your ideas as you will perceive by the following account.—I went to the Iron Works the latter end of Oct. My intention at the time of writing to you was to construct an experiment arch of 250 feet, but in the first place, the season was too far advanced to work out of doors and an arch of that extent could not be worked within doors, and *nextly*, there was a prospect of a real bridge being wanted on the spot of 90 feet extent. The person who appeared disposed to erect a bridge is Mr. Foljambe, nephew to the late Sir George Saville, and member in the last Parliament for Yorkshire. He lives

about three miles from the works, and the River Don runs in front of his house, over which there is an old ill-constructed Bridge which he wants to remove. These circumstances determined me to begin an arch of 90 feet with an elevation of 5 feet. This extent I could manage within doors by working half the arch at a time. . . . A great part of our time, as you will naturally suppose, was taken up in preparations, but after we began to work we went on rapidly, and that without any mistake, or anything to alter or amend. The foreman of the works is a relation to the proprietors, an excellent mechanic, and who fell into all my ideas with great ease and penetration. I stayed at the works till one half the rib, 45 feet, was completed and framed horizontally together and came up to London at the meeting of Parliament on the 4th of December. The foreman, whom, as I told him, I should appoint 'President of the Board of Works, in my absence,' wrote me that he has got the other half together with much less trouble than the first. He is now preparing for erecting, and I for returning.

"February 26.—A few days ago I received a letter from Mr. Foljambe in which he says: 'I saw the rib of your bridge. In point of elegance and beauty, it far exceeded my expectations and is certainly beyond anything I ever saw.'—My model and myself had many visitors while I was at the works. A few days after I got there, Lord Fitz-William, heir to the Marquis of Rockingham, came with Mr. Burke. The former gave the workmen five guineas and invited me to Wentworth House, a few miles distant from the works, where I went, and stayed a few days.

"This bridge I expect will bring forth something greater, but in the meantime I feel like a bird from its nest, and wishing most anxiously to return. Therefore, as soon as I can bring anything to bear, I shall dispose of the contract and bid adieu. I can very truly say that my mind is not at home.

"I am very much rejoiced at the account you give me of the state of affairs in France. I feel exceedingly interested in the happiness of that nation. They are now got, or getting, into the right way, and the present reign will be more immortalized in France than any that ever preceded it. They have all died away, forgotten in the common mass of things, but this will be to France like an Anno Mundi, or an Anno Domini. The happiness of doing good and the pride of doing great things unite themselves in this business. But as there are two kinds of pride—the little and the great, the privileged orders will in some degree be governed by this division. Those of little pride (I mean little-minded pride) will be schismatical, and those of the great pride will be orthodox, with respect to the States General. Interest will likewise have some share, and could this operate freely it would arrange itself on the orthodox side. To enrich a nation is to enrich the individuals which compose it. To enrich the farmer is to enrich the farm—and consequently the landlord;—for whatever the farmer is, the farm will be. The richer the subject, the richer the revenue, because the consumption from which taxes are raised is in proportion to the abilities of people to consume; therefore the most effectual method to raise both the revenue and the rental of a country is to raise the condition of the people,—or that order known

in France by the *Tiers Etat.* But I ought to ask pardon for entering into reasonings in a letter to you, and only do it because I like the subject.

"I observe in all the companies I go into the impression which the present circumstances of France has upon this country. *An internal alliance* in France [between throne and people] is an alliance which England never dreamed of, and which she most dreads. Whether she will be better or worse tempered afterwards I cannot judge of, but I believe she will be more cautious in giving offence. She is likewise impressed with an idea that a negotiation is on foot between the King [Louis XVI.] and the Emperor for adding Austrian Flanders to France. This appears to me such a probable thing, and may be rendered so conducive to the interest and good of all the parties concerned, that I am inclined to give it credit and wish it success. I hope then to see the Scheldt opened, for it is a sin to refuse the bounties of nature. On these matters I shall be glad of your opinion. I think the States General of Holland could not be in earnest when they applied to France for the payment of the quota to the Emperor. All things considered to request it was meanness, and to expect it absurdity. I am more inclined to think they made it an opportunity to find how they stood with France. Absalom (I think it was) set fire to his brother's field of corn to bring on a conversation.

"March 12.—With respect to political matters here, the truth is, the people are fools. They have no discernment into principles and consequences. Had Mr. Pitt proposed a National Convention, at the time of the King's insanity, he had done right; but instead of this he has absorbed the

right of the nation into a right of Parliament,—one house of which (the Peers) is hereditary in its own right, and over which the people have no control (not so much as they have over their King); and the other elective by only a small part of the nation. Therefore he has lessened instead of increased the rights of the people; but as they have not sense enough to see it; they have been huzzaing him. There can be no fixed principles of government, or anything like a constitution in a country where the government can alter itself, or one part of it supply the other.

"Whether a man that has been so completely mad as not to be managed but by force and the mad shirt can ever be confided in afterwards as a reasonable man, is a matter I have very little opinion of. Such a circumstance, in my estimation, if mentioned, ought to be a perpetual disqualification.

"The emperor I am told has entered a caveat against the Elector of Hanover (not the electoral vote) for king of the Romans. John Bull, however, is not so mad as he was, and a message has been manufactured for him to Parliament in which there is nothing particular. The treaty with Prussia is not yet before Parliament but is to be.

"Had the regency gone on and the new administration been formed I should have been able to communicate some matters of business to you, both with respect to America and France; as an interview for that purpose was agreed upon and to take place as soon as the persons who were to fill the offices should succeed. I am the more confidential with those persons, as they are distinguished by the name of the Blue & Bluff,—a dress taken up during

the American War, and is the undress uniform of General Washington with lapels which they still wear. But, at any rate, I do not think it is worth while for Congress to appoint any Minister to this Court. The greater distance Congress observes on this point, the better. It will be all money thrown away to go to any expense about it—at least, during the present reign. I know the nation well, and the line of acquaintance I am in, enables me to judge better than any other American can judge—especially at a distance. If Congress should have any business to state to the government here, it can easily be done through its Minister in Paris—but the seldomer the better.

"I believe I am not so much in the good graces of the Marquis of Landsdowne as I used to be—I do not answer his purpose. He was always talking of a sort of reconnection of England and America, and my coldness and reserve on this subject checked communication."

"London, April 10.—The king continues in his amended state, but Dr. Willis, his son, and attendants are yet about his person. He has not been to Parliament, nor made any public appearance, but he has fixed April 23 for a public thanksgiving, and he is to go in great parade to offer up his devotions at St. Paul's on that day. Those about him have endeavored to dissuade him from this ostentatious pilgrimage, most probably from an apprehension of some effect it may have upon him, but he persists. . . . The acts for regulating the trade with America are to be continued as last year. A paper from the Privy Council respecting the American fly is before Parliament. I had some conversation with Sir Joseph Banks upon this

subject, as he was the person whom the Privy Council referred to. I told him that the Hessian fly attacked only the green plant, and did not exist in dry grain. He said that with respect to the Hessian fly, they had no apprehension, but it was the weevil they alluded to. I told him the weevil had always more or less been in the wheat countries of America, and that if the prohibition was on that account it was a necessary fifty or sixty years ago, as now; that I believe it was only a political manœuvre of the ministry to please the landed interest, as a balance for prohibiting the exportation of wool, to please the manufacturing interest. He did not reply, and as we are on very sociable terms I went farther by saying—The English ought not to complain of the non-payment of debts from America while they prohibit the means of payment.

"I suggest to you a thought on this subject. The debts due before the war, ought to be distinguished from the debts contracted since, and all and every mode of payment and remittance under which they *have been discharged at the time they were contracted* ought to accompany those debts, so long as any of them shall continue unpaid; because the circumstances of payment became united with the debt, and cannot be separated by subsequent acts of one side only. If this was taken up in America, and insisted on as a right co-eval with and inseparable from those debts, it would force some of the restrictions here to give way.

"You speak very truly of this country when you say 'that they are slumbering under a half reformation of politics and religion, and cannot be excited by any thing they hear or see to question the remains of prejudice.' Their ignorance on some matters, is unfathomable, for

instance the Bank of England discounts bills at 5 p cent, but a proposal is talked of for discounting at 4½; and the reason given is the vast quantity of money, and that money of the good houses discounts at 4½; from this they deduce the great ability and credit of the nation. Whereas the contrary is the case. This money is all in paper, and the quantity is greater than the object to circulate it upon, and therefore shows that the market is glutted, and consequently the ability for farther paper excretions is lessened.—If a war should ever break out between the countries again, this is the spot where it ought to be prosecuted. They neither feel nor care for anything at a distance, but are frightened and spiritless at everything which happens at home. The combined fleet coming up the Channel, Paul Jones, and the Mob of 1738, are the dreadful eras of this country. But for national puffing none equals them. The addresses which have been presented are stuffed with nonsense of this kind. One of them published in the *London Gazette* and presented by a Sir William Appleby begins thus,—'Britain, the Queen of Isles, the pride of Nations, the Arbitres of Europe, perhaps of the world.' . . . On the receipt of your last I went to Sir Joseph Banks to inform him of your having heard from Ledyard, from Grand Cairo, but found he had a letter from him of the same date. Sir Joseph is one of the society for promoting that undertaking. He has an high opinion of Ledyard, and thinks him the only man fitted for such an exploration. As you may probably hear of Ledyard by accounts that may not reach here, Sir Joseph will be obliged to you to communicate to him any

matters respecting him that may come to you (Sir Joseph Banks, Bart., Soho Square). . . .

"While writing this I am informed that the Minister has had a conference with some of the American creditors, and proposed to them to assume the debts and give them ten shillings on the pound—the conjecture is that he means, when the new Congress is established, to demand the payment. If you are writing to General Washington, it may not be amiss to mention this—and if I hear farther on the matter I will inform you. But, as being a money matter it cannot come forward but thro' Parliament, there will be notice given of the business. This would be a proper time to show that the British Acts since the Peace militate against the payment by narrowing the means by which those debts might have been paid when they were contracted, and which ought to be considered as constituant parts of the contract."

"June 17.—I received your last to the 21st May. I am just now informed of Messrs. Parker and Cutting setting off to-morrow morning for Paris by whom this will be delivered to you. Nothing new is showing here. The trial of Hastings, and the Examination of evidence before the House of Commons into the Slave Trade still continue.

"I wrote Sir Joseph Banks an account of my Experiment Arch. In his answer he informs me of its being read before the Royal Society who expressed 'great satisfaction at the Communication.' 'I expect' says Sir Joseph 'many improvements from your Countrymen who think with vigor, and are in a great measure free from those shackles of Theory which are imposed on the minds of our people before they are capable of exerting their mental faculties to

advantage.' In the close of his letter he says: 'We have lost poor Ledyard. He had agreed with certain Moors to conduct him to Sennar. The time for their departure was arrived when he found himself ill, and took a large dose of emetic tartar, burst a blood-vessel in the operation, which carried him off in three days. We sincerely lament his loss, as the papers we have received from him are full of those emanations of spirit, which taught you to construct a bridge without any reference to the means used by your predecessors in that art.' I have wrote to the Walkers and proposed to them to manufacture me a complete bridge and erect it in London, and afterwards put it up to sale. I do this by way of bringing forward a bridge over the Thames—which appears to me the most advantageous of all objects. For, if only a fifth of the persons, at a half penny each, pass over a new bridge as now pass over the old ones the tolls will pay 25 per-cent besides what will arise from carriage and horses. Mrs. Williams tells me that her letters from America mention Dr. Franklin as being exceedingly ill. I have been to see the Cotton Mills, —the Potteries—the steel furnaces—tin plate manufacture —white lead manufacture. All those things might be easily carried on in America. I saw a few days ago part of a hand bill of what was called a geometrical wheelbarrow,—but cannot find where it is to be seen. The idea is one of those that needed only to be thought of,—for it is very easy to conceive that if a wheelbarrow, as it is called, be driven round a piece of land,—a sheet of paper may be placed in it—so as to receive by the tracings of a pencil, regulated by a little mechanism—the figure and

content of the land—and that neither theodolite nor chain are necessary."

September 15.—When I left Paris I was to return with the model, but I could now bring over a complete bridge. Though I have a slender opinion of myself for executive business, I think, upon the whole that I have managed this matter tolerably well. With no money to spare for such an undertaking I am the sole patentee here, and connected with one of the first and best established houses in the nation. But absent from America I feel a craving desire to return and I can scarcely forbear weeping at the thoughts of your going and my staying behind.

"Accept, my dear Sir, my most hearty thanks for your many services and friendship. Remember me with an overflowing affection to my dear America—the people and the place. Be so kind to shake hands with them for me, and tell our beloved General Washington, and my old friend Dr. Franklin how much I long to see them. I wish you would spend a day with General Morris of Morrisania, and present my best wishes to all the family.—But I find myself wandering into a melancholy subject that will be tiresome to read,—so wishing you a prosperous passage, and a happy meeting with all your friends and mine, I remain yours affectionately, etc.

"I shall be very glad to hear from you when you arrive. If you direct for me to the care of Mr. Benjamin Vaughn it will find me.—Please present my friendship to Captain Nicholson and family of New York, and to Mr. and Mrs. Few.

"September 18.—I this moment receive yours of the 13 inst. which being post night, affords me the welcome

opportunity of acknowledging it. I wrote you on the 15th by post—but I was so full of the thoughts of America and my American friends that I forgot France.

"The people of this Country speak very differently on the affairs of France. The mass of them, so far as I can collect, say that France is a much freer country than England. The Peers, the Bishops, &c. say the National Assembly has gone too far. There are yet in this country, very considerable remains of the feudal system which people did not see till the revolution in France placed it before their eyes. While the multitude here could be terrified with the cry and apprehension of arbitrary power, wooden shoes, popery, and such like stuff, they thought themselves by comparison an extraordinary free people; but this bugbear now loses its force, and they appear to me to be turning their eyes towards the aristocrats of their own nation. This is a new mode of conquering, and I think it will have its effect.

"I am looking out for a place to erect my bridge, within some of the squares would be very convenient. I had thought of Soho Square, where Sir Joseph Banks lives, but he is now in Lincolnshire. I expect it will be ready for erecting, and in London, by the latter end of October. Whether I shall then sell it in England or bring it over to Paris, and re-erect it there, I have not determined in my mind. In order to bring any kind of a contract forward for the Seine, it is necessary it should be seen, and, as economy will now be a principle in the government, it will have a better chance than before.

"If you should pass through Bordentown in Jersey, which is not out of your way from Philadelphia to New

York, I shall be glad you would enquire out my particular friend Col. Kirkbride. You will be very much pleased with him. His house is my home when in that part of the country—and it was there that I made the model of my bridge."

CHAPTER XIX

London Contacts

Burke at Work on a Pamphlet Defending Monarchy.... Paine Determines to Answer Him....Meets Charles James Fox....An Unpublished Letter Reporting a Conversation with Fox....An Unpublished Letter on English Official Manners.

THE dawn of 1790 found Paine in London looking after the interests of the iron bridge, and conferring there with persons of political consequence. Incidentally he learned that Burke's pamphlet, "Reflections on the French Revolution," was already in the hands of a printer, and would soon be in the hands of the public—if Burke, "much at a loss how to go on" would stop revising it, and permit the printer to proceed with his work. Paine resolved to answer vigorously Burke's defense of monarchy when it was off the press.

The following letter from Paine to some person not named, residing probably in Paris, gives some interesting information about a conversation Paine held with Charles James Fox, the famous English statesman and orator. The letter is dated London, April 16, 1790, and is here published for the first time:

My Dear Friend:

To begin with our journey, we had a very pleasant one. We got to Boulogne on Saturday about five o'clock—(left Paris Thursday about the same time) passed from Boulogne to Dover in three hours and a half, and got to London Monday evening. Sent all your packets to W. Corvie, and though we have alternately called on each other have not yet met. For three or four days after our arrival I missed the little box for Mr. Macpherson which gave me exceeding great concern, and it appeared to me that I had rather have lost my portmanteau. Neither Mr. Rutledge nor I could divine what had become of it, when, to our great satisfaction it appeared, as of itself! I know not how, for, going one evening into my room, it presented itself to me on the table. "Thou little runaway; where hast thou been, and why hast thou plagued me so?" It had, I suppose, slipped into some corner, and the girl in putting the room to rights, had found it!

The morning after my arrival I went first to Debrets, bookseller, Piccadilly; (he is the opposition bookseller.) He informed me that Mr. Burke's pamphlet was in the press, (he is not the publisher,) that he believed Mr. Burke was much at a loss how to go on; that he had revised some of the sheets, six, seven, and one nine times! I then made an appointment with Lord Stanhope, and another with Mr. Fox. The former received me with saying "have I the pleasure of shaking hands with the author of 'Common Sense'?" I told him of the condition of Mr. Burke's pamphlet, and that I had formed to myself the design of answering it, if it should come out at a time when I could devote myself to it. From Lord Stanhope

I went to Mr. Fox, but how was I disappointed to find that he had not received my letter from Paris. That letter, (as you will recollect the contents of it,) laid down all the principal points with respect to the French Revolution, the Test Act, &c., which I intended for subjects for conversation when we met. You will recollect that I expressed some surprise to you at the postage which the servant took for it, and I cannot avoid suspecting that he never put the letter in the office. I mention this that you may question him about it, and be on your guard with respect to your own letters. I always reproach myself for trusting letters by a servant: I sent one to the post-office in London to go by packet to America. The servant brought me 17 shillings out of a guinea, but the letter never arrived.

The conversation with Mr. Fox was chiefly on European politics. There will be no peace, said he, between the Russians, Austrians and Turks, if the King of Prussia can prevent it. I replied that the Turks must be exceedingly unwise, indeed, not to see that Prussia would keep the Turks forever at war with Russia and Austria, if he could, because it took two powerful enemies off his hands, whom he would dread if that peace was concluded, and rather than have it concluded, he would probably join in the war, from an apprehension that if peace was now made with the Turks, Russia and Austria would both attack him. On this Mr. Fox agreed. I then spoke of the reports which were circulated when that war first broke out, that the English Court had spirited up that war on an expectation of drawing France to the support of the Turks; that the policy, besides being wicked, was exceedingly ill-judged, for the effect of the policy went to do France a favor by setting

her free from a connection which, by the change of circumstances on the continent since that connection was formed had not now one Article remaining which induced the connection, nor any new ones to supply their place, that the dissolution of it opened the way to a connection between France and Russia, which was an event the English Cabinet appeared to me not to have sense enough to foresee.

Mr. Fox replied that the English Ministry had always denied the accusation of spiriting up that war, but that, for his part, he believed they were not so clear of the charge as they wished to appear. I talked to him of Mr. Burke's pamphlet, and said that I believed I should reply to it. I afterwards saw Sir George Staunton, to whom I mentioned the same thing. I told him of a letter I saw from Mr. B. to a gentleman at Paris, the contents of which surprised me. He asked me if it was not to Mr. Christie, and spoke of you in very handsome terms. He afterwards told me of a letter from a gentleman at Paris to Mr. Burke. Perhaps, thought I, it is my friend Christie, but I did not ask.

But I am now inclined to think that after all this vaporing of Mr. B., he will not publish his pamphlet. I called yesterday at Debrets, who told me that he has stopped the work. (I had not called on Mr. Burke, and shall not, until his pamphlet comes out, or he gives it up.) I met Dr. Lawrence, an intimate friend of Mr. Burke, a few days ago, to whom I said, "I am exceedingly sorry to see a friend of ours so exceedingly wrong." "Time," says he, "will show if he is." He is, said I, already wrong with respect to time past.

One of the Messrs. Walker, from Rotherham, has come to London, and we have sent a person down to conduct at the Bridge. I hope if Mr. Burke intends to publish, it will be before I am too much engaged. Apropos, I should have told you that Mr. Burke's letter is to be addressed to Lally Tollendal.

I shall in a few days write to my dear friend, the Marquis de Lafayette. In the meantime I wish you to call upon him and tell him my intention. I shall send it in the Marquis de la Lucerne's despatches. Forget not to remember me to him very affectionately, and also to Madame de Lafayette. Shake hands for me with my old friend, Mr. Mazzei. Call upon our friends at No. 36 Palais Royal, and forget me not among the rest of our acquaintances. And if there is anything I can serve you in here, or elsewhere, the greatest favor you can do me is to inform me of it.

I am, my Dear Friend,

Yours very affectionately,

THOMAS PAINE.

Tomorrow I dine at Mr. Vaughn's with Dr. Price.

Direct to me, No. 31 King Street, near Soho Square.

We have had very cold weather—snow and rain for a week past!

If you have an opportunity of seeing the Duke de la Rochefoucault, remember me to him, and to his very kind and good family. Compliments to Mr. Short, M. de Condorcet and Mr. Le Roy.

Did you deliver Mr. Mazzei's letter to Dr. Gern?

Send letters for agent at Philadelphia, M. D'Erembourg.*

In the letter subjoined, from Thomas Paine to a friend, whose name does not appear, and who was living in London, apparently, Paine makes some scathing comments on the bad manners of the English Government. The letter has not been published heretofore.

No. 31 King Street,
Tuesday morning.

My Dear Friend:

On my return home last night I received your favor of Saturday. I was yesterday in the City, and called at your house in the evening. Had I known of your writing to me, I should have stayed or called again. From your house I went to Mr. Gregory, but he was not at home.

You ask if I am not a little severe in my strictures upon England. I confess I have no partiality for what is called, or understood by, the National Character of England. Had you been in America you would have seen it in a different point of view to what presents itself to you here.

It appears to me that the Government has no good manners, and less principle. It acts wrong and its acts that wrong vulgarly. A Nation is only a great individual, and that which is good or bad character for an individual is

* This interesting letter is in the collection of Albert M. Todd, of Kalamazoo, Mich., a member of the Thomas Paine National Historical Association, New York City.

good or bad character for a Nation. Make then an individual of the same disposition which marks the National character, and you will not admire him for a neighbor.

I will, with much pleasure, contribute my services to the business Mr. Forbes agency is upon to France. After writing this I go to my lodgings, where I remain for the day.

I expect some part of the bridge will be erected before Mr. Forbes' return, and I wish him to see it, as he will most probably be asked some questions concerning it by my friends on the other side of the water. I will call on you tomorrow evening about eight o'clock.

Yours sincerely,

THOMAS PAINE.

CHAPTER XX

The Key of the Bastile

Paine Visits Paris....Lafayette Gives Him Key of Bastille to Send to Washington....Letters Accompanying the Key.... Paine's Mother Dies....His Iron Bridge Erected in London.... A Bankruptcy....Bright Prospects.

PAINE visited Paris in the early part of 1790 and found the French capital still rejoicing over the fall of the Bastille. Lafayette assured Paine that it was American principles transplanted to Europe, that had brought about the overthrow of the iniquitous prison. He told Paine that he had saved the key of the chief gate to the prison-fortress, and that he wished to present it to his old friend Washington. Paine, he added, was obviously the one person to whom this relic of otherthrown despotism should be entrusted for transmission to America.

Paine was, of course, delighted, and, returning to London, at once wrote to Washington, as follows:

"London, May 1, 1790.—Sir,—Our very good friend the Marquis de Lafayette has entrusted to my care the key of the Bastille, and a drawing, handsomely framed, representing the demolition of that detestable prison, as a present to your Excellency, of which his letter will more

particularly inform. I feel myself happy in being the person thro' whom the marquis has conveyed this early trophy of the spoils of despotism, and the first ripe fruits of American principles transplanted into Europe to his great master and patron. When he mentioned to me the present he intended you, my heart leaped with joy. It is something so truly in character that no remarks can illustrate it, and is more happily expressive of his remembrance of his American friends than any letters can convey. That the principles of America opened the Bastille is not to be doubted, and therefore the key comes to the right place.

"I beg leave to suggest to your Excellency the propriety of congratulating the King and Queen of France (for they have been our friends,) and the National Assembly, on the happy example they are giving to Europe. You will see by the King's speech, which I enclose, that he prides himself on being at the head of the Revolution; and I am certain that such a congratulation will be well received and have a good effect.

"I should rejoice to be the direct bearer of the marquis's present to your Excellency, but I doubt I shall not be able to see my much loved America till next Spring. I shall therefore send it by some *American* vessel to New York. I have permitted no drawing to be taken here, though it has been often requested, as I think there is a propriety that it should first be presented. But Mr. West wishes Mr. Trumbull to make a painting of the presentation of the key to you.

"I returned from France to London about five weeks ago, and I am engaged to return to Paris when the Constitu-

tion shall be proclaimed, and to carry the American flag in the procession. I have not the least doubt of the final and complete success of the French Revolution. Little ebbings and flowings, for and against, the natural companions of revolutions, sometimes appear; but the full current of it, is, in my opinion, as fixed as the Gulf Stream.

"I have manufactured a bridge (a single arch) of one hundred and ten feet span, and five feet high from the cord of the arch. It is now on board a vessel coming from Yorkshire to London, where it is to be erected. I see nothing yet to disappoint my hopes of its being advantageous to me. It is this only thing which keeps me in Europe, and happy shall I be when I shall have it in my power to return to America. I have not heard of Mr. Jefferson since he sailed, except of his arrival. As I have always indulged the belief of having many friends in America, or rather no enemies, I have here but to mention my affectionate regards, and am, Sir, with the greatest respect, &c.

"If any of my friends are disposed to favor me with a letter it will come to hand by addressing it to the care of Benjamin Vaughn, Esq., Jeffries Square, London."

A month later Paine wrote again to Washington about the key of the Bastille. This is the letter:

"London, May 31, 1790.—Sir,—By Mr. James Morris, who sailed in the May Packet, I transmitted you a letter from the Marquis de Lafayette, at the same time informing you that the Marquis had entrusted to my charge the key of the Bastille, and a drawing of that prison, as a present to your Excellency. Mr. J. Rutledge, jun'r, had intended

coming in the ship 'Marquis de Lafayette,' and I had chosen that opportunity for the purpose of transmitting the present; but, the ship not sailing at the time appointed, Mr. Rutledge takes his passage on the packet, and I have committed to his care that trophy of liberty which I know it will give you pleasure to receive. The French Revolution is not only complete but triumphant, and the envious despotism of this nation is compelled to own the magnanimity with which it has been conducted.

"The political hemisphere is again clouded by a dispute between England and Spain, the circumstances of which you will hear before this letter can arrive. A messenger was sent from hence the 6th inst. to Madrid with very peremptory demands, and to wait there only forty-eight hours. His return has been expected for two or three days past. I was this morning at the Marquis del Campo's but nothing is yet arrived. Mr. Rutledge sets off at four o'clock this afternoon, but should any news arrive before the making up the mail on Wednesday June 2, I will forward it to you under cover.

"The views of this court as well as of the nation, so far as they extend to South America, are not for the purpose of freedom, but conquest. They already talk of sending some of the young branches to reign over them, and to pay off their national debt with the produce of their mines. The bondage of those countries will, as far as I can perceive, be prolonged by what this court has in contemplation.

"My bridge is arrived and I have engaged a place to erect it in. A little time will determine its fate, but I yet see no cause to doubt of its success, tho' it is very probable

that a war, should it break out, will as in all new things, prevent its progress so far as regards profits.

"In the partition in the box, which contains the key of the Bastille, I have put up half a dozen razors, manufactured from cast-steel made at the works where the bridge was constructed, which I request you to accept as a little token from a very grateful heart.

"I received about a week ago a letter from Mr. G. Clymer. It is dated the 4th February, but has been travelling ever since. I request you to acknowledge it for me and that I will answer it when my bridge is erected. With much affection to all my friends, and many wishes to see them again, I am, etc."

The key reached Washington, in New York, and he wrote acknowledging Paine's "agreeable letters" on August 10, 1790. Washington also wrote:

"It must, I dare say, give you great pleasure to learn by repeated opportunities, that our new government answers its purposes as well as could have been reasonably expected, that we are gradually overcoming the difficulties which presented in its first organization, and that our prospects in general are growing more favorable."

Several amusing paragraphs concerning the key of the Bastille are in despatches addressed to his government in Paris, by Louis Otto, Chargé d'Affaires. Otto wrote:

"August 4, 1790.—In attending yesterday the public audience of the President, I was surprised by a question from the Chief Magistrate, 'whether I would like to see the key of the Bastille?' One of his secretaries showed me at the same moment a large key, which had been sent to the President by desire of the Marquis de Lafayette. I dissembled my surprise in observing to the President that 'the time had not yet come in America to do iron-work equal to that before him.' The Americans present looked at the key with indifference, and as if wondering why it had been sent. But the serene face of the President showed that he regarded it as an homage from the French nation."

Another despatch of the French Chargé d'Affairs, dated Dec. 13, 1790, says "The key of the Bastille, regularly shown at the President's audiences, is now also on exhibition in Mrs. Washington's *salon*, where it satisfies the curiosity of the Philadelphians. I am persuaded, Monseigneur, that it is only their vanity that finds pleasure in the exhibition of this trophy, but Frenchmen here are not the less piqued, and many will not enter the President's house on this account."

The key of the Bastille is now on exhibition at Washington's fine old home in Mount Vernon, Va., where it is treasured as one of the most valuable of the relics there displayed. Hanging on the wall next to the famous key is a copy of Paine's letter to Washington apprising him of Lafayette's gift.

Washington's razors made in the Rotherham ironworks are, no doubt, in some other collection of Washington relics and curiosities, probably with no mention of Rotherham on the card which informs visitors that these razors belonged to the nation's first president.

Paine left London for a brief time in May, 1790, going to Thetford, where his aged mother had just died, and he probably also visited Rotherham to attend to matters connected with his bridge.

Paine's iron bridge, 110 feet long, was at last, June, 1790, erected in London, at Leasing Green, now known as Paddington Green. It was put up at the joint expense of Paine and Peter Whiteside, an American merchant in London. The newspapers published descriptions of the bridge, which were chiefly praiseful, and many persons journeyed to the Green to see the novelty in engineering. A fee of one shilling was charged for viewing the bridge. It is said that the site of Paine's bridge on Paddington Green was where the statue to Mrs. Siddons, an English actress, now stands.

Disaster overtook Whiteside's business, however, and he was forced to make an assignment. His assignees, finding the sum of £620 on his books debited to Paine's bridge, descended upon the inventor

for that amount, which he probably did not owe, as it was Whiteside's business investment. Two American merchants in London, Murdoch and Cleggett, signed Paine's bail-bond, and helped him scrape together the money to pay the amount. Paine may have lost additional money in the collapse of Whiteside's business, including funds he had deposited for the weekly transmission of nine shillings to his mother. The bridge exhibition prospered, however, delegations from other cities flocking to London to see "the wonderful invention," and it looked as if this impecunious idealist was at last to come into a fortune.

CHAPTER XXI

"The Rights of Man"

Paine in Winter Quarters at 'The Angel"....Burke's Pamphlet Appears....Paine Sets Feverishly to Work on His Reply ...."The Rights of Man" Printed, February, 1791....Paine Goes to Paris....His Arguments Against Monarchy....The Society for Promoting Constitutional Knowledge....Conservative American Disapproval of "Rights of Man"....Its Embarrassing Dedication to Washington.

INTERESTED as was Paine in the success of his patents, in the news he received of political matters in America, and in the prospect of financial rewards from the bridge invention, which might at last bring him ease and comfort, the author was far more deeply stirred by the call of his fellow-man in England, suffering under the corrupt government of that day.

Thomas Paine was, in the fall of 1790, living at the old Angel Inn in Islington,* which was then one of the many little towns surrounding the city of London, and is now a part of the great metropolis. In the first week of November appeared Burke's much-

* "The Angel" at Islington is shown in one of Hogarth's pictures, entitled "The Stage Coach." The old building was torn down long since, and has twice been replaced by more modern, but, of course, less picturesque structures. The present building is still known as "The Angel."

heralded book "Reflections on the Revolution in France," and Paine at once began writing his reply.

I have always believed that Paine took up his winter lodgings in the quiet old Angel, far from Soho and other districts of London where Paine's address was well-known, for the distinct purpose of obtaining the solitude and privacy necessary to an author for the writing of so vastly important a work as Paine contemplated as his answer to Burke.

When Burke's book appeared (Nov. 1, 1790) Paine set feverishly to work on his reply, for which he selected the appropriate title, "Rights of Man."

"Rights of Man," Part I, with a dedication to George Washington, was printed in February, 1791, by one Johnson, who had delayed by reason of excessive timidity, putting the work on his presses. Only a very few copies were printed, when Johnson, perhaps intimidated by the government, suspended his work. Only one copy is known to be in existence. This rare book is in the British Museum, London. J. S. Jordan, at 166 Fleet Street, having greater courage, took over the work, and published the first edition March 13, 1791. Paine entrusted the work to a committee of three friends—William Godwin, Thomas Brand Hollis and Thomas Holcroft—and

went over to Paris, from which city he sent Jordan a brief preface, which reached Jordan in time for inclusion in his first edition. (See Vol. VI, p. 3.)

"Rights of Man" remains today, as when published, more than 130 years ago, the most forceful and most lucid exposition of basic human rights ever written.

There had been rumors in London, which reached Paine, that Burke was a "masked pensioner" receiving £1500 a year from the government. He mentions the "rumor" in his reply to Burke, and Burke did not trouble himself to deny it. We know now that he was expecting the "masked pension" to be increased to £2500, to which figure the pension was raised soon afterwards. Burke was hardly in a position therefore to attempt any denial.

Burke's book was a defense of monarchy and hereditary succession based on the revolution of 1688, which Burke accepted as authoritative.

Paine, replying in "Rights of Man, Part I," dedicated to George Washington, inquires how one revolution can be authoritative and not another? He asks pointedly how the seventeenth century came to acquire a monopoly in revolution? If, in one century, a revolution can substitute one family on the throne for another family, why might not the same

power in a different revolution transfer the throne to an elective monarch, or a president, or even leave the throne vacant?

The famous Burke had for an opponent a master mind in matters of government.

Paine, in stating first principles of human government, advocates no particular form. The people have the right to establish what government they please, a monarchy or a democracy; if a monarchy, not hereditary. He says a real constitution must be of the people and for the people and he shows how unjust and how ridiculous it is to govern the living and the yet unborn by laws made for previous generations.

Paine exposed mercilessly the disadvantages of hereditary rule. He reviewed at some length the events which led to the French Revolution (a chapter which might not inappropriately have borne the title that Burke bestowed upon the book Paine was answering with "Rights of Man"). Paine pointed out the insufferable conditions which had resulted in the revolution. Burke, in his love of royalty—real or professed—waxed sentimental over the Queen of France, and Paine replied to this with his splendid and famous epigram: "He pities the plumage, but forgets the dying bird."

Paine, answering Burke's statements concerning the Revolution in France, and the outrages said to have been committed by mobs, says:

"It is by distortedly exalting some men that others are distortedly debased. A vast mass of mankind are degradedly thrown into the background of the human picture, to bring forward, with greater glare, the puppet show of state and aristocracy. In the commencement of a revolution, those men are rather followers of the camp than of the standard of liberty, and have yet to be instructed how to use it."

"Rights of Man" excited great interest and was sold in immense numbers. The Society for Promoting Constitutional Knowledge (of which Paine was a member) adopted laudatory resolutions on March 23. On April 23 an affiliated society in Dublin, Ireland, passed similar resolutions, and appointed a committee "to consider the most effectual mode of disseminating Mr. Paine's pamphlet on the 'Rights of Man.'"

Paine turned over to this "constitutional society" all the proceeds of the pamphlet, which had been published at three shillings, the same price as had been set upon Burke's "Reflections." Paine could ill-afford to give this money, especially after Whiteside's failure.

Gouverneur Morris, a republican but of the most conservative type, was in Paris just now on a secret financial mission entrusted to him by Washington. His old dislike for Paine as a radical seems to have been revived and intensified by the principles expressed in "Rights of Man." Perhaps dealing with royalty had aroused in him a distaste for the common people who were Paine's great concern.

Jefferson had requested Morris to pose for a bust of Washington—the resemblance between them being rather striking—by the famous French sculptor, Houdon. When Jefferson left Paris to return to America, Morris appears to have tried to pose as Washington in the eyes of political Europe.

About this time Morris makes an interesting entry in his diary. In the comfort of his luxurious quarters in Paris, he comments on Paine's "wretched apartments,"—probably a judgment colored by his prejudice against the author. At any rate, in those apartments, epoch-making books were being written.

Morris was not the only American with a penchant for royalty. John Adams was another figure of the days of the American Revolution whose apostacy to hereditary monarchy and nobility was noted. Although he had declared with a certain amount of fervency that "History will ascribe the American

Revolution to Thomas Paine," the publication of "Rights of Man" by Paine was most distasteful to him, and he vigorously denounced the book. Tobias Lear, Washington's secretary, reported to Washington that he had heard Adams say, with his hand upon his breast: "I detest that book, and its tendency, from the bottom of my heart."

On July 29, 1791, Jefferson wrote to Paine:

"Indeed I am glad that you did not come away till you had written your 'Rights of Man.' A writer under the name of Publicola has attacked it, and a host of champions has entered the arena immediately in your defence."

The dedication of "Rights of Man," Part I, to Washington caused the President some embarrassment because Washington, anxious to free America from British garrisons, was trying to accomplish his object by offering a liberal commercial treaty to England. It was on this mission that Gouverneur Morris had been sent to Europe. In October, 1789, Washington, in his own hand, had written Gouverneur Morris requesting him to go abroad in the capacity of private agent, and on the authority and credit of this letter, to converse with His Britannic Majesty's Ministers on these points; viz., whether there were any, and what objections to performing

those articles in the treaty which remained to be performed on his part, and whether they incline to a treaty of commerce with the United States on any, and what terms?

Paine, of course, knew nothing about the secret mission of Morris, and had no reason to suppose his extravagant, though whole-hearted, dedication to Washington would cause the President any perplexity. The author sent fifty copies of his book to Washington, through Mr. Green, of Portsmouth, England, who was about to embark for America. By Mr. Green he sent also a cordial letter to Washington, presenting the books "as a token of remembrance." These copies of "Rights of Man, Part I," and the letter were, no doubt, received by the President toward the end of August or the beginning of September.

In his letter to Washington Paine gives some interesting information about the number printed in the first edition, its reception by the public, his intention of bringing out a cheap edition, etc. This is the letter in full:

"London, July 21, 1791—Dear Sir.—I received your favor of last August by Col. Humphries since which I have not written to or heard from you. I mention this that you may know no letters have miscarried. I took the liberty

of addressing my late work 'Rights of Man,' to you; but tho' I left it at that time to find its way to you, I now request your acceptance of fifty copies as a token of remembrance to yourself and my friends. The work has had a run beyond anything that has been published in this country on the subject of government, and the demand continues. In Ireland it has had a much greater. A letter I received from Dublin, 10th of May, mentioned that the fourth edition was then on sale. I know not what number of copies were printed at each edition, except the second, which was ten thousand. The same fate follows me here as I *at first* experienced in America, strong friends and violent enemies, but as I have got the ear of the country, I shall go on, and at least shew them, what is a novelty here, that there can be a person beyond the reach of corruption.

"I arrived here from France about ten days ago. M. de Lafayette is well. The affairs of that country are verging to a new crisis, whether the government shall be monarchial and hereditary or wholly representative? I think the latter opinion will very generally prevail in the end. On this question the people are much forwarder than the National Assembly.

"After the establishment of the American Revolution, it did not appear to me that any object could arise great enough to engage me a second time. I began to feel myself happy in being quiet; but I now experience that principle is not confined to time or place, and that the ardor of Seventy-six is capable of renewing itself. I have another work on hand which I intend shall be my last, for I long much to return to America. It is not natural that fame

should wish for a rival, but the case is otherwise with me, for I do most sincerely wish there was some person in this country that could usefully and successfully attract the public attention, and leave me with a satisfied mind to the enjoyment of quiet life: but it is painful to see errors and abuses and sit down a senseless spectator. Of this your own mind will interpret mine.

"I have printed sixteen thousand copies; when the whole are gone of which there remain between three and four thousand I shall then make a cheap edition, just sufficient to bring in the price of the printing and paper, as I did by 'Common Sense.'

"Mr. Green who will present you this, has been very much my friend. I wanted last October to draw for fifty pounds on General Lewis Morris who has some money of mine, but as he is unknown in the commercial line, and American credit not very good, and my own expended, I could not succeed, especially as Gov'r Morris was then in Holland. Col. Humphries went with me to your agent Mr. Walsh, to whom I stated the case, and took the liberty of saying that I knew you would not think it a trouble to receive it of Gen. Morris on Mr. Walsh's account, but he declined it. Mr. Green afterwards supplied me and I have since repaid him. He has a troublesome affair on his hands here, and is in danger of losing thirty or forty thousand pounds, embarked under the flag of the United States is East India property. The persons who have received it withhold it, and shelter themselves under some law contrivance. He wishes to state the case to Congress, not only on his own account, but as a matter that may be nationally interesting.

"The public papers will inform you of the riots and tumults at Birmingham, and of some disturbances at Paris, and as Mr. Green can detail them to you more particularly than I can do in a letter, I leave those matters to his information. I am, etc.,

"THOMAS PAINE."

From the general tenor of Paine's letter we may infer that the author was, at this time, living very agreeably in London, under the government he is said to have offended.

Washington, ever prudent, thought it best to defer acknowledging Paine's gift and the presentation letter until a later period. A space of more than ten months elapsed, during which the author was entirely in the dark as to whether his letter and the books were received by the President, when one day the long silence was broken by the receipt of this letter:

"Philadelphia, May 6, 1792.

"Thomas Paine, Esq.,

"Dear Sir:

"To my friends, and those who know my occupations, I am sure no apology is necessary for keeping their letters so much longer unanswered, than my inclination would lead me to do. I shall therefore offer no excuse for not having sooner acknowledged the receipt of your letter of the 21st of June [July]. My thanks, however, for the

token of your remembrance, in the fifty copies of *'The Rights of Man,'* are offered with no less cordiality, than they would have been had I answered your letter in the first moment of receiving it.

"The duties of my office, which at all times, especially during the session of Congress, require an unremitting attention, naturally become more pressing towards the close of it; and as that body have resolved to rise tomorrow, and as I have determined, in case they should, to set out for Mount Vernon on the next day, you will readily conclude that the present is a busy moment with me; and to that I am persuaded your goodness will impute my not entering into the several points touched upon in your letter. Let it suffice, therefore, at this time, to say, that I rejoice in the information of your personal prosperity, and, as no one can feel a greater interest in the happiness of mankind than I do, that it is the first wish of my heart that the enlightened policy of the present age may diffuse to all men those blessings to which they are entitled, and lay the foundation of happiness for future generations.—With great esteem, I am, dear Sir, &c.

"P.S. Since writing the foregoing, I have received your letter of the 13th of February, with the twelve copies of your new work, which accompanied it, and for which you must accept my additional thanks."

Events of the utmost importance had transpired in the interval between the date of Paine's letter to Washington and the author's receipt of the President's acknowledgment.

Washington's reply was friendly and cordial enough, but in its deliberate vagueness and in the fact that no mention is made of the extremely complimentary dedication to Washington, it is not difficult to perceive the President's lack of enthusiasm for the spread of revolution in Europe. Washington at this time was chiefly interested in the restoration of normal commerce and the peaceful development of international trade.

CHAPTER XXII

Paine Proposes a French Republic

Flight of the French Royalty....Lafayette and Paine....Return of the King....Paine Mistaken for an Aristocrat....A Narrow Escape....The First Republican Manifesto....Paine's Republican Club....A Translation of "Rights of Man," Part I.

THE royal plumage, which excited the pity of Mr. Burke, took flight from the French capital, while the city slept, in the very early hours of June 21, 1791. Paris had scarcely awakened on that fateful day, when Lafayette, much agitated, burst into Paine's bedroom, shouting "The birds are flown!"

The author had not yet arisen; although he had been awake for some time in consequence of shouting in the street. Paine, seeming unperturbed by the news, Lafayette drew a few steps nearer, and repeated excitedly, "I tell you the birds are flown!"

The author of "Rights of Man" calmly replied, "It is well. I hope that there will be no attempt to recall them." The streets were packed with an excited throng. Lafayette induced Paine to dress at once and go with him to the street. There they found the people in an uproar, discussing excitedly the sudden flight of the royal family. Lafayette was recognized

by the throng gathered outside the Hotel de Ville, (City Hall,) and was accused by the crowd of aiding the King to escape. He retorted, with a smile, "Since each of you saves twenty sous tax by the suppression of the Civil List, I see no reason for complaint."

Thomas Christie, a nephew of Joseph Priestley, was in the crowd, and, seeing his friends Paine and Lafayette, spoke to them. "You see," Christie said, "the absurdity of monarchical governments—a whole nation disturbed by the folly of one man."

Louis XVI had seen the storm-clouds gathering in the political skies, and, after conference with his friends, decided there was safety only in flight. He left a letter denouncing all liberal measures to which he had affixed his name since October, 1789. This letter settled his future as a ruler of France. Then it became known that the most powerful of the revolutionary figures—Robespierre and Marat particularly—had at no time considered a republic, and did not even know what a republic was.

Paine was a witness on June 25 of the return of the King, who had been captured at Varennes, 150 miles from Paris, and dragged, with his family, back to the capital. He saw the ridiculous, though pathetic, spectacle of the people forcibly bringing back to Paris the unwanted monarch who had relieved them

of his presence! Paine had an unpleasant experience on this occasion, as a result of his not having decorated his hat with the popular cockade. Some ruffians in the crowd noted the absence of the cockade, and set upon the author with cries of "Aristocrat! A la lanterne!" He was treated rather roughly before being rescued by a Frenchman who spoke English, and who, after talking to Paine, informed the crowd that the omission of the cockade was quite accidental. It was indeed a curious turn of fate that so ardent a republican, and friend of the people, engaged at this very time in founding the first republican society in France and writing its manifesto, which was soon to be placarded throughout Paris, should be set upon by the crowd, and only by chance miss being strung up on a lamp-post!

This Republican Manifesto, posted in the streets of Paris on July 1, read as follows:

"Brethren and fellow citizens:

"The serene tranquillity, the mutual confidence which prevailed amongst us, during the time of the late King's escape, the indifference with which we beheld him return, are unequivocal proofs that the absence of a King is more desirable than his presence, and that he is not only a political superfluity, but a grievous burden, pressing hard on the whole nation.

"Let us not be imposed upon by sophisms; all that concerns us is reduced to four points.

"He has abdicated the throne in having fled from his post. Abdication and desertion are not characterized by the length of absence; but by the single act of flight. In the present instance, the act is everything, and the time nothing.

"The nation can never give back its confidence to a man who, false to his trust, perjured to his oath, conspires a clandestine flight, obtains a fraudulent passport, conceals a King of France under the disguise of a valet, directs his course towards a frontier covered with traitors and deserters, and evidently meditates a return into our own country, with a force capable of imposing his own despotic laws.

"Whether ought his flight to be considered as his own act, or the act of those who fled with him? Was it a spontaneous resolution of his own, or was it inspired into him by others? The alternative is immaterial; whether fool or hypocrite, idiot or traitor, he has proved himself equally unworthy of the important functions that had been delegated to him.

"In every sense that the question can be considered, the reciprocal obligation which subsisted between us is dissolved. He holds no longer any authority. We owe him no longer obedience. We see in him no more than an indifferent person; we can regard him only as Louis Capet.

"The history of France presents little else than a long series of public calamity, which takes its source from the vices of the Kings; we have been the wretched victims that

have never ceased to suffer either for them or by them. The catalogue of their oppressions was complete, but to complete the sum of their crimes, treason yet was wanting. Now the only vacancy is filled up, the dreadful list is full; the system is exhausted; there are no remaining errors for them to commit, their reign is consequently at an end.

"What kind of office must that be in a government which requires for its execution neither experience nor ability? that may be abandoned to the desperate chance of birth, that may be filled by an idiot, a madman, a tyrant, with equal effect as by the good, the virtuous, and the wise? An office of this nature is a mere nonentity: it is a place of show, not of use. Let France then, arrived at the age of reason, no longer be deluded by the sound of words, and let her deliberately examine, if a King, however insignificant and contemptible in himself, may not at the same time be extremely dangerous.

"The thirty millions which it costs to support a King in the éclat of stupid brutal luxury, presents us with an easy method of reducing taxes, which reduction would at once release the people, and stop the progress of political corruption. The grandeur of nations consists, not, as Kings pretend, in the splendor of thrones, but in a conspicuous sense of their own dignity, and in a just disdain of those barbarous follies and crimes, which, under the sanction of royalty, have hitherto desolated Europe.

"As to the personal safety of Louis Capet, it is so much the more confirmed, as France will not stoop to degrade herself by a spirit of revenge against a wretch who has dishonored himself. In defending a just and glorious

cause, it is not possible to degrade it, and the universal tranquillity which prevails is an undeniable proof that a free people know how to respect themselves."

It is said that besides affixing the manifesto to walls and trees where it would be seen and read by passing pedestrians, one brave spirit nailed a copy on the door of the National Assembly!

The bill was torn from the Assembly door by Malouet, a royalist member, who was greatly angered by what he read. He and Martineau, a deputy representing Paris, complained about it to the Assembly, and great agitation resulted. The prosecution of Thomas Paine and Achille Duchâtelet was proposed. A majority of the deputies, however, were unprepared to commit themselves on the subject, and no action was taken by the Assembly.

Paine's Republican Club had overnight become a very important organization. Its manifesto was a fruitful topic of conversation (and disputation) with both the royalists and those who favored the republican idea. There is no doubt that it converted to republicanism a great many who were only lukewarm in their support of monarchy.

The royalists, who had been alarmed by the advent of a republican club in Paris and by the vigorous de-

nunciation of monarchy in the bills posted on walls by members of the club, would have been astounded to learn—which they did not—that the club was composed of only five members! This was not known until some years later, when Paine made known the number of members at the time the club was organized and the manifesto issued. Who the members were besides Paine, Duchâlet and Condorcet has never been known positively but it is probable that the two other members were Nicholas Bonneville and Jean Pierre Brissot, both warm friends of Paine.

A translation of "Rights of Man," Part I, by François Soule, appeared in Paris, May, 1791. The translator hid his identity under his initials. The edition was printed by Buisson, rue Hautefeuille, Paris, and sold in large numbers. Paine wrote a special preface for this French edition. The dedication to Washington, translated, was given in full. At the end of the title-page appears, in very large type, the date, *Mai 1791.*

In the Paris *Moniteur*, of July 8, we find this brief but spirited statement by Paine of his attitude toward kings and monarchy:

"I am not the personal enemy of Kings. Quite the contrary. No man wishes more heartily than myself to see

them all in a happy and honorable state of private individuals; but I am the avowed, open, and intrepid enemy of what is called monarchy; and I am such by principles which nothing can either alter or corrupt—by my attachment to humanity; by the anxiety which I feel within myself for the dignity and honor of the human race; by the disgust which I experience when I observe men directed by children and governed by brutes; by the horror which all the evils that monarchy has spread over the earth excite within my breast; and by those sentiments which make me shudder at the calamities, the exactions, the wars, and the massacres with which monarchy has crushed mankind: in short, it is against all the hell of monarchy that I have declared war."

CHAPTER XXIII

Paine Returns to London

Back in England....A Meeting Prevented....A Manifesto Against Taxation....Paine and Clio Rickman....Rickman's "Life of Paine"....Everyday Life of the Great Pamphleteer.... Letter to the Addressers"...."Rights of Man," Part II....A Note to Washington.

PAINE determined now to return to London that he might attend the celebration in that city of the second anniversary of the taking of the Bastille, to which he had been invited. He arrived in the British capital on July 13, the day preceding the anniversary date, and registered at the White Bear, Piccadilly. Learning that his Republican Manifesto, which had created so much commotion in Paris, had also excited the Britons, Paine decided not to attend. The celebration was to be held at the Crown and Anchor, but persons opposed to Paine and to the French Revolution persuaded the owner to close his doors against the advertised meeting. Great indignation was felt about this attempt to prevent a gathering in honor of the fall of the much detested French prison, and it was decided to issue a manifesto. Paine wrote it and it was adopted at a meeting held on August 20 at the Thatched House Tavern. John Horne Tooke

signed Paine's paper as chairman of the meeting. It was the first distinct warning England had that a revolution was at her doors. The manifesto was headed "Address and Declaration of the Friends of Universal Peace and Liberty." The "address" was preceded by a forceful "Declaration of the Volunteers of Belfast," some quotations from which appear in the second paragraph.

"Friends and Fellow Citizens: At a moment like the present, when wilful misrepresentations are industriously spread by partisans of arbitrary power and the advocates of passive obedience and court government, we think it incumbent upon us to declare to the world our principles, and the motives of our conduct.

"We rejoice at the glorious event of the French Revolution. If it be asked, 'What is the French Revolution to us?' we answer, as has already been answered in another place,* 'It is much—much to us as men; much to us as Englishmen. As men, we rejoice in the freedom of twenty-five millions of men. We rejoice in the prospect which such a magnificent example opens to the world.'

"We congratulate the French nation for having laid the axe to the root of tyranny, and for erecting government on the sacred hereditary rights of man; rights which appertain to all, and not to any on more than another.

"We know of no human authority superior to that of a whole nation; and we profess and claim it as our

* "Declaration of the Volunteers of Belfast."

principle that every nation has at all times an inherent and indefeasable right to constitute and establish such government for itself as best accords with its disposition, interest, and happiness.

"As Englishmen we also rejoice, because we are immediately interested in the French Revolution.

"Without inquiring into the justice, on either side, of the reproachful charges of intrigue and ambition which the English and French Courts have constantly made on each other, we confine ourselves to this observation:—that if the Court of France only was in fault, and the numerous wars which have distressed both countries are chargeable to her alone, that court now exists no longer, and the cause and the consequence must cease together. The French therefore, by the revolution they have made, have conquered for us as well as for themselves, if it be true that their Court only was in fault, and ours never.

"On this side of the case the French Revolution concerns us immediately: we are oppressed with a heavy national debt, a burthen of taxes, an expensive administration of government, beyond those of any people in the world.

"We have also a very numerous poor; and we hold that the moral obligation of providing for old age, helpless infancy and poverty, is far superior to that of supplying the invented wants of Courtly extravagance, ambition and intrigue.

"We believe there is no instance to be produced, but in England, of seven millions of inhabitants, which make but little more than one million families, paying yearly seventeen millions of taxes.

"As it has always been held out by the administrations that the restless ambition of the Court of France rendered this expenses necessary to us for our own defence, we consequently rejoice, as men deeply interested in the French Revolution; for that Court, as we have already said, exists no longer, and consequently the same enormous expenses need not continue to us.

"Thus rejoicing as we sincerely do, both as men and Englishmen, as lovers of universal peace and freedom, and as friends to our national prosperity and reduction of our public expenses, we cannot but express our astonishment that any part or any members of our own government should reprobate the extinction of that very power in France or wish to see it restored, to whose influence they formerly attributed (whilst they appeared to lament) the enormous increase of our own burthens and taxes. What, then, are they sorry that the pretence for new oppressive taxes, and the occasion for continuing many old taxes, will be at an end? If so, and if it is the policy of Courts and Court government to prefer enemies to friends, and a system of war to that of peace, as affording more pretences for places, offices, pensions, revenue and taxation, it is high time for the people of every nation to look with circumspection to their own interests.

"Those who pay the expenses, and not those who participate in the emoluments arising from them, are the persons immediately interested in inquiries of this kind. We are a part of that national body on whom this annual expense of seventeen millions falls; and we consider the present opportunity of the French Revolution as a most happy one for lessening the enormous load under which

this nation groans. If this be not done we shall then have reason to conclude that the cry of intrigue and ambition against other Courts is no more than the common cant of all Courts.

"We think it also necessary to express our astonishment that a government desirous of being called FREE, should prefer connexion with the most despotic and arbitrary powers in Europe. We know of none more deserving this description than those of Turkey and Prussia, and the whole combination of German despots.

"Separated as we happily are by nature from the tumults of the continent, we reprobate all systems and intrigues which sacrifice (and that too at a great expense) the blessings of our natural situation. Such systems cannot have a natural origin.

"If we are asked what government is, we hold it to be nothing more than a national association; and we hold that to be the best which secures to every man his rights and promotes the greatest quantity of happiness with the least expense. We live to improve, or we live in vain; and therefore we admit of no maxims of government or policy on the mere score of antiquity or other men's authority, the old whigs or the new.

"We will exercise the reason with which we are endued, or we possess it unworthily. As reason is given at all times, it is for the purpose of being used at all times.

"Among the blessings which the French Revolution has produced to that nation we enumerate the abolition of the feudal system, of injustice, and of tyranny, on the 4th of August, 1789. Beneath the feudal system all Europe has long groaned, and from it England is not yet free. Game

laws, borough tenures, and tyrannical monopolies of numerous kinds still remain amongst us; but rejoicing as we sincerely do in the freedom of others till we shall haply accomplish our own, we intended to commemorate this prelude to the universal extirpation of the feudal system by meeting on the anniversary of that day (the 4th of August) at the Crown and Anchor: from this meeting we were prevented by the interference of certain unnamed and skulking persons with the master of the tavern, who informed us that on their representation he would not receive us. Let those who live by or countenance feudal oppressions take the reproach of this ineffectual meanness and cowardice to themselves: they cannot stifle the public declaration of our honest, open, and avowed opinions.

These are our principles, and these our sentiments; they embrace the interest and happiness of the great body of the nation of which we are a part. As to riots and tumults, let those answer for them who by wilful misrepresentations endeavor to excite and promote them; or who seek to stun the sense of the nation, and lose the great cause of public good in the outrages of a mis-informed mob. We take our ground on principles that require no such riotous aid.

"We have nothing to apprehend from the poor for we are pleading their cause; and we fear not proud oppression for we have truth on our side.

"We say and we repeat it that the French Revolution opens to the world an opportunity in which all good citizens must rejoice, that of promoting the general happiness of man, and that it moreover offers to this country in par-

ticular an opportunity of reducing our enormous taxes. These are our objects, and we will pursue them."

The English Court no doubt viewed with pleasure the downfall of the French King who had aided America in her revolution against Britain, but was now alarmed to see signs of French revolutionary principles carried across the Channel into England.

The British government now took a hand in affairs by preventing the assembly of republicans in their usual meeting places in London, plainly showing its fear of the consequences of unrestricted assembly and free-speech. There were already many "constitutional clubs" in England and Ireland. "Rights of Man" was their testament and Paine was looked upon as a savior.

Paine's home in London was at this time in the house of Thomas Clio Rickman, 7 Upper Mary-le-bone Street. Rickman was an ardent republican and Paine's devoted friend. He was a publisher and bookseller, and also maintained a book-bindery. Rickman had known Paine in Lewes in the days before Paine came to America, and he was delighted to have so congenial a spirit take up his residence with him and his family. One of Rickman's boys had been named Thomas Paine Rickman and the others also bore the names

of great republicans. Rickman was a poet, too, and several of his florid effusions were dedicated to Paine or related to the author of "Rights of Man."

In 1819—ten years after Paine's death—Rickman published a "Life of Thomas Paine," which for many years ranked as the only authentic biography of the noted author. It contained much valuable first-hand information. These paragraphs from Rickman's book give us an interesting glimpse of Paine's every-day life at this period:

"Mr. Paine's life in London was a quiet round of philosophical leisure and enjoyment. It was occupied in writing, in a small epistolary correspondence, in walking about with me to visit different friends, occasionally lounging at coffee-houses and public places, or being visited by a select few. Lord Edward Fitzgerald, the French and American Ambassadors, Mr. Sharp the engraver, Romney the painter, Mrs. Wolstonecraft, Joel Barlow, Mr. Hull, Mr. Christie, Dr. Priestley, Dr. Towers, Col. Oswald, the walking Stewart, Captain Sampson Perry, Mr. Tuffin, Mr. William Choppin, Captain De Stark, Mr. Horne Tooke, &c. &c., were among the number of his friends and acquaintance; and of course, as he was my inmate, the most of my associates were frequently his. At this time he read but little, took his nap after dinner, and played with my family at some game in the evening, as chess, dominos and drafts, but never at cards; in recitations, singing, music, &c.; or passed it in conversation: the part he took

in the latter was always enlightened, full of information, entertainment and anecdote. Occasionally we visited enlightened friends, indulged in domestic jaunts and recreations from home, frequently lounging at the White Bear, Picadilly, with his old friend the walking Stewart, and other clever travellers from France, and different parts of Europe and America. When by ourselves we sat very late, and often broke in on the morning hours, indulging the reciprocal interchange of affectionate and confidential intercourse. 'Warm from the heart and faithful to its fires' was that intercourse, and gave to us the 'feast of reason and the flow of soul.' "

"Mr. Paine in his person was about five feet ten inches high, and rather athletic; he was broad-shouldered, and latterly stooped a little. His eye, of which the painter could not convey the exquisite meaning, was full, brilliant and singularly piercing; it had in it the 'muse of fire.' In his dress and person he was generally very cleanly, and wore his hair cued, with side curls, and powdered, so that he looked altogether like a gentleman of the old French school. His manners were easy and gracious; his knowledge was universal and boundless; in private company and among his friends his conversation had every fascination that anecdote, novelty and truth could give it. In mixed company and among strangers he said little, and was no public speaker."

In Rickman's home Paine wrote Part II of "Rights of Man" and his "Letter to the Addressers." * The

* The small, square mahogany table on which Paine wrote the "Address to the Addressers" and "Rights of Man," Part II, is

latter was written in reply to the "Royal Proclamation Against Seditious Writings," May 21, 1792. The "Letter to the Addressers" followed "Rights of Man," and was published by both Rickman and H. D. Symonds. Subsequently another printer published it as Part III of "Rights of Man." Both of these works had a tremendous vogue. The government prosecuted Rickman and Symonds for printing this work of Paine. The second part of "Rights of Man" was published by Jordan, February 17, 1792.

In Part II "Rights of Man," Paine freely discusses his political philosophy, which may be given, briefly, as follows:

1. Government is the organization of the aggregate of those natural rights which individuals are not competent to secure individually, and therefore surrender to the control of society in exchange for the protection of all rights.

2. Republican government is that in which the welfare of the whole nation is the object.

3. Monarchy is government, more or less arbitrary, in which the interests of an individual are paramount to those of the people generally.

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still, I believe, a treasured possession of Edward Truelove, a London bookseller. I endeavored to purchase it for the Paine Memorial House, but the family was disinclined to part with it.

4. Aristocracy is government, partially arbitrary, in which the interests of a class are paramount to those of the people generally.

5. Democracy is the whole people governing themselves without secondary means.

6. Representative government is the control of a nation by persons elected by the whole nation.

7. The Rights of Man mean the right of all to representation.

Paine dedicated Part II to his good friend Lafayette. In a preface he refers to Burke's evasion of any reply to "Rights of Man," Part I, and Burke's statement that the only refutation it deserved was "criminal justice"! Paine, apologizing for the pun, remarks that the book's condemnation, which was the only answer Burke offered, being unable to refute the work, was, indeed, "criminal justice"!

Paine had not yet received any acknowledgment from Washington of his receipt of fifty copies of Part I, dedicated to him, but he made up a package of a dozen copies of Part II, and sent them to the President with this hurried note: *

* This communication, which, I believe, has not been published heretofore, is in the manuscript collection of J. Pierpont Morgan, New York.

"London, Feb. 13th, 1792.

"Sir:

"An opportunity immediately offering, I have had a dozen copies of my new work put up for the purpose (the work being not yet published,) to present to you and Mr. Jefferson. I hope the fifty copies of my former work, which were sent to Portsmouth, (England) to the care of Mr. Greene, have come safe to your hands.

"Wishing you every happiness, I remain,

"Your much obliged obedient

"Humble servant,

"THOMAS PAINE."

"George Washington,
"President of the
United States."

CHAPTER XXIV

The Prosecution of "Rights of Man"

The Success of "Rights of Man"....200,000 Copies Sold.... Government Prosecution Begun....Paine Summonsed....Letter to Dundas....Information Against Paine....British and American Governmental Expenses Compared....Paine in Court....A Meeting at Epsom....Paine's Letter to the Lewes' Meeting....Gifts and a Letter to the Society for Constitutional Information.

THE British public was hungering for Part II of "Rights of Man." Part I had uttered the unspoken thoughts of thousands of Britons, and their appetites were whetted for a further elucidation of their ideas. Fifty thousand copies of Part I had been sold within a very short time.

In his preface to the second part Paine speaks of his finding the work too bulky to be made into one volume and his determination to publish his ideas on the "Rights of Man" in two separate books. He says:

"Several other reasons contributed to produce this determination. I wished to know the manner in which a work, written in a style of thinking and expression at variance with what had been customary in England, would be received, before I proceeded further. A great field was opening to the view of mankind by means of the

French Revolution. Mr. Burke's outrageous opposition thereto brought the controversy into England. He attacked principles which he knew (from information) I would contest with him, because they are principles I believe to be good, and which I have contributed to establish, and conceive myself bound to defend."

A publisher in London named Chapman had offered Paine one thousand guineas (approximately $5000) for the manuscript of Part II, but the writer declined, telling Chapman that he "wished to reserve it in his own hands." The offer probably came from the British Ministry through Chapman. At any rate Paine thought that the government wished to destroy his work. Chapman was frightened, if not actually intimidated, and declined to proceed with its publication. Half of the book was already in type, and printed. Paine took the work away from Chapman, turning it over to J. S. Jordan, 166 Fleet Street. Jordan published "Rights of Man," Part II, on February 17, 1792.

Part Second met with instant success. The demand for Part II increased, of course, the sale of Part I, and editions were printed of the two parts together. The popularity of "Rights of Man" may be estimated by the fact that by the end of 1793 200,000 copies had been sold!

Government prosecutions commenced within three months of the appearance of Part II. On May 14 Paine, learning that the government had issued a summons against Jordan, hastened to assure the publisher that he would assume entire responsibility and would pay all the expense of Jordan's defence. He did not know that Jordan had privately compromised the matter by agreeing to plead guilty, surrendering all his notes relating to Paine, and receiving a verdict against the book. On May 21, at Rickman's house, where he was living, a summons was left for the author, demanding his appearance on June 8 before the Court of King's Bench. A royal proclamation against "seditious writings" was issued on the same day.

Henry Dundas, Secretary for the Home Department, in a debate on the proclamation in the House of Commons, on May 25, said that the proceedings were taken against Jordan, the publisher, because Thomas Paine, the author, could not be found. Paine, knowing this was untrue, immediately addressed a letter to the Attorney-General. Referring to what Secretary Dundas had stated in the House, Paine, in his letter, said:

"Mr. Paine, Sir, so far from secreting himself never went a step out of his way, nor in the least instance varied

from his usual conduct, to avoid any measure you might choose to adopt with respect to him. It is on the purity of his heart, and the universal utility of the principles and plans which his writings contain, that he rests the issue; and he will not dishonor it by any kind of subterfuge. The apartments which he occupied at the time of writing the work last winter, he has continued to occupy to the present hour, and the solicitors of the prosecution know where to find him; of which there is a proof in their own office, as far back as the 21st of May, and also in the office of my own attorney.—But admitting, for the sake of the case, that the reason for proceeding against the publication was, as Mr. Dundas stated, that Mr. Paine could not be found, that reason can now exist no longer. The instant that I was informed that an information was preparing to be filed against me as the author of, I believe, one of the most useful and benevolent books ever offered to mankind, I directed my attorney to put in an appearance; and as I shall meet the prosecution fully and fairly, and with a good and upright conscience, I have a right to expect that no act of littleness will be made use of on the part of the prosecution towards influencing the future issue with respect to the author. This expression may, perhaps, appear obscure to you, but I am in the possession of some matters which serve to show that the action against the publisher is not intended to be a *real* action."

Paine then says that should his suspicions in this matter prove to be well-founded, he would withdraw from his intention of defending the publisher, and

he suggests that the government's case against Jordan be abandoned. Paine adds, significantly, at the close of his letter:

"I believe that Mr. Burke, finding himself defeated, has been one of the promoters of this prosecution; and I shall return the compliment by showing, in a future publication, that he has been a masked pensioner at £1500 per annum for about ten years. Thus it is that the public money is wasted, and the dread of public investigation is produced."

The information against Paine—hand-written in those days, of course—covered forty-one pages, octavo. It is a curiosity of those times, well worth careful perusal. It runs in part as follows:

"Thomas Paine, late of London, gentleman, being a wicked, malicious, seditious, and ill-disposed person, and being greatly disaffected to our said Sovereign Lord, the now King, and to the happy constitution and government of this kingdom . . . and to bring them into hatred and contempt, on the sixteenth day of February, in the thirty-second year of the reign of our said present Sovereign Lord, the King, with force and arms at London aforesaid, to wit, in the parish of St. Mary le Bone, in the Ward of Cheap, he, the said Thomas, wickedly, maliciously and seditiously, did write and publish, and caused to be written and published, a certain false, scandalous, malicious, and seditious libel, of and concerning the said late happy Revolution, and the said settlements and limitations of the

crown and regal governments of the said kingdoms and dominions . . . intituled, 'Rights of Man, Part the Second, Combining principle and practice.' . . . In one part thereof, according to the tenor and effect following, that is to say, 'All hereditary government is in its nature tyranny. An heritable crown' (meaning, amongst others, the crown of this kingdom) 'or an heritable throne,' (meaning the throne of this kingdom), 'or by what-other fanciful name such things may be called, have no other significant explanation than that mankind are heritable property. To inherit a government is to inherit the people, as if they were flocks and herds.' . . . 'The time is not very distant when England will laugh at itself for sending to Holland, Hanover, Zell, or Brunswick, for men' (meaning the said King William the Third, and King George the First) 'at the expense of a million a year, who understood neither her laws, her language, nor her interest, and whose capacities would scarcely have fitted them for the office of a parish constable. If government could be trusted to such hands, it must be some easy and simple thing indeed; and materials fit for all the purposes may be found in every town and village in England.' In contempt of our said Lord the now King and his laws, to the evil example of all others in like case offending, and against the peace of our said Lord the King, his crown and dignity. Whereupon the said Attorney General of our said Lord the King, who for our said Lord the King in this behalf, prosecuteth for our said Lord the King, prayeth the consideration of the court here in the premises, and that due process of law may be awarded against him, the said Thomas Paine,

in this behalf, to make him answer to our said Lord the King, touching and concerning the premises aforesaid.

"To this information the defendant hath appeared, and pleaded Not Guilty, and thereupon issue is joined."

In this indictment (or "information") we observe the British government of 1792 taking the first step in its attempt to destroy Thomas Paine.

In the information (specifications and quotations) Paine's comment on the celebration of the William and Mary centenary is repeated three times. This comment by Paine seems to have been very irritating:

"I happened to be in England at the celebration of the centenary of the Revolution of 1688. The characters of William and Mary have always appeared to me detestable; the one seeking to destroy his uncle, the other her father, to get possession of power themselves; yet, as the nation was disposed to think something of the event, I felt hurt at seeing it ascribe the whole reputation of it to a man who had undertaken it as a job; and who besides what he otherwise got, charged six hundred thousand pounds for the expense of the little fleet that brought him from Holland. George the First acted the same close-fisted part as William had done, and bought the Duchy of Bremen with the money he got from England, two hundred and fifty thousand pounds over and above his pay as King; and, having thus purchased it at the expense of England, added it to his Hanoverian dominions for his own private profit. In fact every nation that does not govern itself

is governed as a job. England has been the prey of jobs ever since the Revolution."

Paine was denounced in the House of Commons for having "reviled what was most sacred in the Constitution, destroyed every principle of subordination, and established nothing in their room."

The truth was that Paine had actually supplied the substitute to place "in the room" of hereditary monarchy—the representative system already established—through his efforts—in the United States. And he had in his book compared the expenses of the two governments. Paine pointed out that the British government's pension list was greater than the entire governmental expenses of the United States. He had written on this point:

"Here is a form and system of government that is better organized than any other government in the world, and that for less than one hundred thousand pounds, and yet early member of Congress receives as a compensation for his time and attendance on public business, one pound seven shillings per day, which is at the rate of nearly five hundred pounds a year. This is a government that has nothing to fear. It needs no proclamations to deter people from writing and reading. It needs no political superstition to support it. It was by encouraging discussion and rendering the press free upon all subjects of government, that the principles of government became understood in

America, and the people are now enjoying their present blessings under it. You hear of no riots, tumults and disorders in that country; because there exists no cause to produce them. Those things are never the effect of freedom, but of restraint, oppression, and excessive taxation."

Paine was summoned to appear in court on June 8 to answer the charges against him. But he was disappointed, upon appearance, to learn that the trial had been postponed to December.

Lord Onslow (Cranley, Lord Lieutenant of Surrey) had summoned a meeting of the "gentry" at Epsom to respond loyally to the proclamation, and Paine sent him, for distribution to the "gentry" at his assemblage, 100 copies of "Rights of Man" and 1000 copies of his "Letter to Dundas." Paine sent his gift to the meeting by Horne Tooke who opened his speech by a remark on the impropriety of a meeting presided over by Lord Onslow, a bed-chamber lord, (sinecure) at £1000, with a pension of £3000. Tooke was cut short in his speech, and it was continued by Paine, whose two letters to Onslow had received wide circulation.

In July there was a meeting in Lewes, Sussex, in response to the proclamation against "seditious writings." Paine wrote on June 20 the following letter, addressed "To the Sheriff, or Presiding Officer," at

the meeting in Lewes, and he requested that his letter be read to the persons attending the meeting. This is the letter:

"It is now upwards of eighteen years since I was a resident inhabitant of the town of Lewes. My situation among you as an officer of the revenue, for more than six years, enabled me to see into the numerous and various distresses which the weight of taxes even at that time of day occasioned; and feeling, as I then did, and as it is natural for me to do, for the hard condition of others, it is with pleasure I can declare, and every person then under my survey, and now living, can witness the exceeding candor, and even tenderness, with which that part of the duty that fell to my share was executed. The name of Thomas Paine is not to be found in the records of the Lewes justices, in any one act of contention with, or severity of any kind whatever towards, the persons whom he surveyed, either in the town or in the country; of this Mr. Fuller and Mr. Shelley, who will probably attend the meeting, can, if they please, give full testimony. It is, however, not in their power to contradict it. Having thus indulged myself in recollecting a place where I formerly had, and even now have, many friends, rich and poor, and most probably some enemies, I proceed to the import of my letter. Since my departure from Lewes, fortune or providence has thrown me into a line of action which my first setting out in life could not possibly have suggested to me. . . . Many of you will recollect, that while I resided among you, there was not a man more firm and open in supporting the principles of liberty than myself, and I still pursue, and ever will, the same path."

Societies "for promoting constitutional information" had sprung up in several cities of England and Ireland. The society in London was probably the largest organization. When Jordan wrote Paine that a sum of more than one thousand pounds stood on his books to the author's credit Paine instructed Jordan to send the entire amount as a gift to the Society for Constitutional Information. In addition to this gift Paine had given the society the right to publish his "Letter to Dundas," the "Letter to Raynal" and "Common Sense." Paine kept the society informed of matters concerning his "Rights of Man" and other writings relating to the fight for the people of England.

"Rights of Man" was the earliest complete statement of republican principles. Jefferson, Madison and Jackson—the three Presidents of the United States who above all others represented the republican idea which Paine first allied with American independence—pronounced the principles set forth in "Rights of Man" to be the fundamental principles of the American Republic.

In May he had sent the following letter, which has not been published heretofore, to the chairman of the society in London:

"London, May 12, 1792.

"The honorable patronage which the Society for Constitutional Information has repeatedly given to the works entitled 'Rights of Man' renders it incumbent on me to communicate to them whatever relates to the progress of those works.

"A great number of letters from various parts of the country have come to me expressing an earnest desire that the first and second parts of 'Rights of Man' be rendered more generally useful by printing them in a cheaper manner than they have hitherto been. As these requests were from persons to whom the purchase at the present price was inconvenient, I took the proper means for complying with their request.

"I am since informed that the Ministry intends bringing a prosecution, and as a Nation (as well the poor as the rich) has a *right* to know what my works are that are made the subject of a prosecution, the getting out a cheap edition is, I conceive, considered more necessary than before, as a means towards supporting that right; and I have the pleasure of informing the Society that I am proceeding with the work.

"I am, Sir, with great respect,

"Your obedient and Humble Servant,

"THOMAS PAINE.

"Author of 'Common Sense' and of the 'Rights of Man,' parts first and second.

"To the Chairman of the Society for Promoting Constitutional Knowledge." *

* Letter now in the possession of Albert M. Todd, Kalamazoo, Mich., of the Thomas Paine National Historical Association, N. Y.

CHAPTER XXV

The Escape from England

Four French Departments Elect Paine Deputy....The National Assembly Makes Him "Citizen"....Notification of Election from Puy-de-Dôme....Calais Sends an Emissary to Paine....Prospect of a "Packed Jury"....William Blake Warns Paine....Paine Reaches Dover....Search by Customs Officials....Impression Created by Washington's Letter....The Packet Sails....Tremendous Reception at Calais....Triumphal Progress to Paris.

IN recognition of Paine's sympathy with the French Revolution and in token of appreciation for Paine's "Rights of Man," four different departments of France—Pas-de-Calais, Somme, Puy-de-Dôme and Oise—early in September, 1792, elected the author a member of the French National Convention. Only a few days before—on August 26—the National Assembly, on the motion of M. Guadet, had conferred the honorary title of French citizen on Paine, Washington, Madison, Hamilton, Kosciusko, Priestley, David Williams, Clarkson, Anacharsis Clootz, Paw, Cormelle, Gilleers, Campe, Klopstock, N. Pestalozzi, Bentham, Gorani, Wilberforce and Mackintosh. A few days later these names were added to the list: Schiller, Thomas Cooper, John

Horne Tooke, Thomas Christie, Joel Barlow, Dr. Joseph Warren, John Oswald and George Boies.

Louvet, author of "La Sentinelle," and thirty-two other men, representing nine communes, on September 8 elected Paine the representative of Puy-de-Dôme, and Paine was urged to accept in the following enthusiastic appeal signed by Louvet:

"Your love for humanity, for liberty and equality, the useful works that have issued from your heart and pen in their defence, have determined our choice. It has been hailed with universal and reiterated applause. Come, friend of the people, to swell the number of patriots in an assembly which will decide the destiny of a great people, perhaps of the human race. The happy period you have predicted for the nations has arrived. Come! do not deceive their hope!"

The department of Calais had, however, already (September 6) elected Paine to the Convention, and had sent Achille Audibert to London to urge Paine's acceptance. Paine had delayed his reply on account of his eagerness to encounter the English government in court, but his friends, believing his martyrdom before a "packed jury" would be severer than he expected, urged him to accept and go over to Paris.

William Blake, the English artist, poet and mystic, who was a friend of Paine and Rickman, and a visitor

at the Rickman home, where Paine lived, is said to have warned Paine's friends to get him off to France without delay. There had been a meeting of the "Friends of Liberty" at the home of Paine's friend, Johnson, on the evening of September 12. Paine had made a little speech. Alexander Gilchrist, who was present with Blake, gives this account of that episode in his "Life of Blake":

"On Paine's rising to leave, Blake laid his hand on the orator's shoulder, saying, 'You must not go home, or you are a dead man,' and hurried him off on his way to France, whither he was now in any case bound to take his seat as a legislator. By the time Paine was at Dover, the officers were in his house, [he was staying at Rickman's, in Marylebone] and, some twenty minutes after the Custom House officials at Dover had turned over his slender baggage, narrowly escaped from the English Tories. Those were hanging days! Blake on the occasion showed greater sagacity than Paine, whom, indeed, Fuseli affirmed to be more ignorant of the common affairs of life than himself even. In spite of unworldiness and visionary faculty, Blake never wanted for prudence and sagacity in ordinary matters."

Paine left London for the seacoast on September 13, the day following Blake's warning. Accompanying him were Achille Audibert and John Frost, a lawyer. Paine little knew that he was bidding farewell to England forever.

Upon reaching Dover the little party found the town greatly inflamed by the proclamation against seditious writings. The customs collector having received instructions to be very vigilant searched both the trunks and the clothing of the three men.

Paine reported the search in his letter to Dundas. This extract tells the story briefly:

"Among the letters which he took out of my trunk were two sealed letters, given into my charge by the American Minister in London [Pinckney], one of which was addressed to the American Minister at Paris, the other to a private gentleman; a letter from the President of the United States, and a letter from the Secretary of State in America, both directed to me, and which I had received from the American Minister, now in London, and were private letters of friendship; a letter from the electoral body of the department of Calais, containing the notification of my being elected to the National Convention; and a letter from the president of the National Assembly informing me of my being also elected for the department of the Oise [Versailles]. . . . When the collector had taken what papers and letters he pleased out of the trunks, he proceeded to read them. The first letter he took up for this purpose was that from the President of the United States to me.* While he was doing this I said, that it was very extraordinary that General Washington could not write a letter of private friendship to me, without its being

* Letter in the collection of Albert M. Todd, of Kalamazoo, Mich.

subject to be read by a custom-house officer. Upon this Mr. Frost laid his hand over the face of the letter, and told the collector that he should not read it, and took it from him. Mr. Frost then, casting his eyes on the concluding paragraph of the letter, said, I will read this part to you, which he did; of which the following is an exact transcript—'And as no one can feel a greater interest in the happiness of mankind than I do, it is the first wish of my heart that the enlightened policy of the present age may diffuse to all men those blessings to which they are entitled and lay the foundation of happiness for future generations.' "

The collector seemed greatly impressed by the signature of the American President. He took the documents, leaving with Paine a list of them. In a brief time the papers were returned. The packet to Calais sailed a few minutes later with the three travellers aboard. Twenty minutes after its departure an order for Paine's arrest reached Dover.*

As the packet sailed into the harbor of old Calais a salute in honor of the American passenger elected to the French Convention was fired by the shore

* Joseph McCabe, the eminent English Rationalist and author, who has long been a great admirer of Thomas Paine, and is an Honorary Vice-President of the Thomas Paine National Historical Association, tells me in a recent letter that his great-grandfather was one of the party in pursuit of Paine at this time. "There hangs over the mantelpiece in my study," writes Mr. McCabe, "an old sword with which—family legend

battery. Many persons had gathered to see the distinguished man land on French soil. There were cheers and waving of flags and shouts of welcome. French officers embraced Paine as he stepped ashore. A beautiful young woman requested the honor of placing the cockade in Paine's hat, and delivered a pretty little speech, in which she introduced the words "Liberty, Fraternity, Equality." She concluded her part with a kiss and embrace. The crowd shouted *"Vive Thomas Paine!"* The author was presented to the Mayor of Calais, and other officials, at the town hall. Then Paine was escorted to a meeting of the Constitutional Society of Calais, where he sat beside the president, and under the entwined colors of France, England and America, as he received the official announcement of his election. In the evening, at the theatre, a box was decorated "For the Author of 'Rights of Man.' "

The author was greeted with rapturous welcome from town to town as he made his way to Paris. He was popular not only because he espoused the French

hath it—my great-grandfather went after 'that terrible scoundrel Tom Paine.' He is said to have just missed Paine, and thrust his sword, in fiery British anger, through the bed! It may conceivably be true when Paine stopped at Dover on his way to France. Anyhow, reparation is now made. His great-grandson worships Paine and does his best to undo the muddle of the English gentleman who led the soldiers after him."

people in his reply to Burke's "Reflections," but was doubly a hero by reason of his outwitting his British pursuers when leaving England for France.

CHAPTER XXVI

Valiant Defense of a Lost Monarch

Paine Seated in the National Convention....On the Committee to Draft a Constitution....Paine's Humanitarianism ....The King Intrigues With Enemy Powers....Paine Pleads for His Life....Vote on the King's Punishment....Paine's Address....Marat the Bloodthirsty....Paine's Eloquence Is in Vain.

PAINE reached Paris on September 19, and went at once to the Philadelphia House, also known as White's Hotel. Two days later he was in the procession to the Tuileries to have his credentials verified by the expiring Assembly.

September 21, 1792, commenced the Year One of the new French calendar. The decree announcing the calendar change proclaimed that "Royalty is from this day abolished in France." Paine immediately took his seat in the Convention and was welcomed cordially by Danton and other members. Paine published a letter to his "Fellow Citizens" in which he expresses "affectionate gratitude" for his adoption as a citizen, and his election to the Convention. "My felicity," he wrote, "is increased by seeing the barrier broken down that divided patriotism by spots of earth, and citizenship limited to the soil, like vegetation.

An over-ruling Providence is regenerating the old world by the principles of the new. It is impossible to conquer a nation determined to be free. It is now the cause of all nations against the cause of all Courts. In entering on this great scene, greater than any nation has been called to act in, let us say to the agitated mind, be calm! Let us punish by instruction, rather than by revenge. Let us begin the new era by a greatness of friendship, and hail the approach of union and success."

The Convention appointed on October 11 a committee to draft a constitution. These were the members selected for this work: Sieyès, Paine, Brissot, Pétion, Vergniaud, Gensonne, Barrère, Danton, Condorcet. Supplementary — Barbaroux, Hérault, Séchelles, Lanthenas, Débry, the Abbé Fauchet, Lavicourterie. Paine was placed second to his old adversary, Sieyès, only because of his unfamiliarity with French. At least four of the Committee understood English—Condorcet, Danton, Barrère and Brissot. Several members understood English—Danton, Condorcet, Brissot, and, of course, Paine. Paine was an old friend of Brissot, whom he had known in America. Both were writers and they both were greatly interested in negro emancipation.

Brissot was the editor of *Le Patriote Français*. The issue of October 25th contained an interesting contribution by Paine on the subject of royalty. This is what Paine wrote for Brissot:

"We are astonished at reading that the Egyptians set upon the throne a stone, which they called king. Well! such a monarch was less absurd and less mischievous than those before whom nations prostrate themselves. At least he deceived no one. None supposed that he possessed qualities or a character. They did not call him Father of his People; and yet it would have been scarcely more ridiculous than to give such a title to a blockhead whom the right of succession crowns at eighteen. A dumb idol is better than one animated.

"It is little to overthrow the idol; it is the pedestal which must especially be beaten down. It is the kingly office, rather than the officer, that is destructive. This is not seen by every one."

Paine's intention of saving the life of Louis XVI may be read between the lines of the second paragraph. "It is the pedestal which must especially be beaten down." There was a group intent upon the execution of the King, and Paine had resolved to defeat them in their purpose, if he could. With a vision that looked far beyond the puppet on the French throne, he discerned the evils of the system, and

knew that the only cure for the troubles of France was the abolition of hereditary monarchy. The execution of the King would only mean another member of the royal family on the throne wallowing in riches and luxury extorted from the people. France had suffered for centuries from cruel oppression.

Paine's humanitarianism played its part, too, in his determination to save, if possible, the life of the King of France. Besides, Paine had not forgotten Louis' great aid to America in the American Revolution.

On Nov. 20 secret papers of the King were found concealed in one of the walls of the Tuileries, documents which revealed his intrigues with foreign powers. The discovery enraged the populace, and the city howled for the King's life. Paine spent the evening in his rooms at Philadelphia House, No. 7 Passage des Petits Pères, writing—in English, since he was not sufficiently familiar with French—his letter to the president of the Convention in behalf of the wretched King's life. In the morning he had his essay translated, and it was read that day—Nov. 21—to the assembled members of the Convention. Paine's plea for the King had been called quixotic, and it is undeniably true that there was small chance

of its accomplishing its purpose, but it was a statesman-like document, bravely expressed. The Marquise de Condorcet translated the paper for Paine.

Before the vote on the King's punishment was taken Paine handed to the president of the Convention his manuscript address. It argued that banishment for the King, and not death, was from many viewpoints the best measure. He argued that against the transgressions of the King it should be remembered that Louis had aided America to break her shackles. Paine's address said:

"Let then those United States be the guard and the asylum of Louis Capet. There, in the future, remote from the miseries and crimes of royalty, he may learn, from the constant presence of public prosperity, that the true system of government consists not in monarchs, but in fair, equal, and honorable representation. In recalling this circumstance, and submitting this proposal, I consider myself a citizen of both countries. I submit it as an American who feels the debt of gratitude he owes to every Frenchman. I submit it as a man, who, albeit an adversary of Kings, forgets not that they are subject to human frailties. I support my proposal as a citizen of the French Republic, because it appears to me the best and most politic measure that can be adopted. As far as my experience in public life extends, I have ever observed that the great mass of people are always just, both in their intentions

and their object; but the true method of attaining such purpose does not always appear at once. The English nation had groaned under the Stuart despotism. Hence Charles I. was executed; but Charles II. was restored to all the powers his father had lost. Forty years later the same family tried to re-establish their oppression; the nation banished the whole race from its territories. The remedy was effectual; the Stuart family sank into obscurity, merged itself in the masses, and is now extinct.

"It has already been proposed to abolish the penalty of death, and it is with infinite satisfaction that I recollect the humane and excellent oration pronounced by Robespierre on the subject, in the constituent Assembly. Monarchical governments have trained the human race to sanguinary punishments, but the people should not follow the examples of their oppressors in such vengeance. As France has been the first of European nations to abolish royalty, let her also be the first to abolish the punishment of death, and to find out a milder and more effectual substitute."

Marat was for the death of the King and swayed a vast number of the members at the trial. It is known that Villette was threatened with death if he did not vote for the execution of the King, and it is probable that many others were intimidated. Sieyès, Paine's old opponent in political controversy, also voted for death. Robespierre, Danton, Marat, and a vast majority of the other members also voted death.

Paine had prepared himself for the occasion, and

when his name was called shouted in French: "I vote for the detention of Louis until the end of the war, and after that his perpetual banishment." His vote doubtless influenced others to the same course. When, on the next day, January 20, 1793, the final vote was taken, Paine mounted the tribune, with Bancal, (Franklin's friend), and the secretary commenced reading Paine's speech. He was interrupted by the blood-thirsty Marat, who cried: "I submit that Thomas Paine is incompetent to vote on this question; being a Quaker, his religious principles are opposed to the death-penalty." To which Paine quietly replied: "I voted against it both morally and politically." There was a scene of wild excitement. In the great din that followed Marat's interruption could be heard demands for freedom of speech. When the noise subsided the secretary was permitted to read Paine's speech:

"Very sincerely do I regret the Convention's vote of yesterday for death. I have the advantage of some experience; it is nearly twenty years that I have been engaged in the cause of liberty, having contributed something to it in the Revolution of the United States of America. My language has always been that of liberty *and* humanity, and I know by experience that nothing so exalts a nation as the union of these two principles, under all circumstances. I know that the public mind of France, and par-

ticularly that of Paris, has been heated and irritated by the dangers to which they have been exposed; but could we carry our thoughts into the future, when the dangers are ended, and the irritations forgotten, what to-day seems an act of justice may then appear an act of vengeance. [*Murmurs.*] My anxiety for the cause of France has become for the moment concern for her honor. If, on my return to America, I should employ myself on a history of the French Revolution, I had rather record a thousand errors dictated by humanity, than one inspired by a justice too severe. I voted against an appeal to the people, because it appeared to me that the Convention was needlessly wearied on that point; but I so voted in the hope that this Assembly would pronounce against death, and for the same punishment that the nation would have voted, at least in my opinion, that is, for reclusion during the war and banishment thereafter. That is the punishment most efficacious, because it includes the whole family at once, and none other can so operate. I am still against the appeal to the primary assemblies, because there is a better method. This Convention has been elected to form a Constitution, which will be submitted to the primary assemblies. After its acceptance a necessary consequence will be an election, and another Assembly. We cannot suppose that the present Convention will last more than five or six months. The choice of new deputies will express the national opinion on the propriety or impropriety of your sentence, with as much efficacy as if those primary assemblies had been consulted on it. As the duration of our functions here cannot be long, it is a part of our duty to consider the interests of those who shall replace us. If

by any act of ours the number of the nation's enemies shall be needlessly increased, and that of its friends diminished, —at a time when the finances may be more strained than to-day,—we should not be justifiable for having thus unnecessarily heaped obstacles in the path of our successors. Let us therefore not be precipitate in our decisions.

"France has but one ally—the United States of America. That is the only nation that can furnish France with naval provisions, for the kingdoms of northern Europe are, or soon will be, at war with her. It happens, unfortunately, that the person now under discussion is regarded by Amricans as having been the friend of their Revolution. I can assure you that his execution will there spread universal sorrow, and it is in your power not thus to wound the feelings of your ally. Could I speak the French language I would descend to your bar, and in their name become your petitioner to respite the execution of the sentence on Louis."

Marat, livid with rage, was on his feet the moment the interpreter concluded. Marat shouted: "This is not the language of Thomas Paine. I denounce the interpreter. It is a wicked and faithless translation." Garran came to the rescue of the reader. He declared the translation correct. Paine maintained his poise throughout the excitement. The clerk then concluded the reading of Paine's speech:

"Your Executive Committee will nominate an Ambassador to Philadelphia; my sincere wish is that he may

announce to America that the National Convention of France, out of pure friendship to America, has consented to respite Louis. That people, your only ally, ask you by my vote to delay the execution.

"Ah, citizens, give not the tyrant of England the triumph of seeing the man perish on the scaffold who helped my much-loved America to break his chains!"

Of the 721 members voting on the subject of the King's punishment, 387 voted unconditionally for death, and 334 for his imprisonment, "or his death conditionally." In the latter number may be included 2 votes for putting the King "in chains." These figures (which do not correspond with those given by Thomas Carlyle, and former biographers of Paine) are taken from the official statistics of the vote in the "*Appel Nominal*," published very soon after the vote was taken, at the *Imprimerie Nationale* in Paris.

On January 21, 1793, the day after the vote was taken, Louis XVI was carted to the guillotine and beheaded.

CHAPTER XXVII

Paine Is Outlawed by England

Postponed Trial of "Rights of Man"...."Letter to the Addressers"....Paine Burnt in Effigy...."Special Jury" Selected ....Paine's Letter to the Court....Erskine's Defense of Paine ....A Verdict of "Guilty"....Publication of the Trial....Reign of Terror Among English Publishers of Paine....Jubilation of the Tories.

"RIGHTS OF MAN," Part II, had been published in England in innumerable cheap editions and had achieved, despite government efforts to impede its sale, a very great popularity.

The prosecution of Paine by the British government did not commence until cheap editions had placed Paine's work in the hands of the poor. The government cared nothing about its reaching the wealthy and the aristocracy, but it feared the common people. The case was to be tried before a "special jury" (which meant a jury "hand-picked" by the Crown) on December 18, 1792. Before that date Paine's "Letter to the Addressers," containing additional flings at the corrupt British government of that period, was printed, and already popular.

Some sentences in the "Letter to the Addressers," achieving instant popularity, became the proverbs of

the people. Here are a few of the striking statements in this work:

"It is a dangerous attempt in any government to say to a Nation, *Thou shalt not read.*"

"Thought, by some means or other, is got abroad in the world, and cannot be restrained, though reading may."

"Whatever the rights of the people are, they have a right to them, and none has a right either to withhold or to grant them."

"The project of hereditary governors and legislatures was a treasonable usurpation over the rights of posterity."

"Put a country right, and it will soon put government right."

"When the rich plunder the poor of his rights, it becomes an example to the poor to plunder the rich of his property."

"Who are those that are frightened at reform? Is the public afraid its taxes will be lessened too much? Are they afraid that sinecure places and pensions should be abolished too fast? Are the poor afraid that their condition should be rendered too comfortable?"

"A thing moderately good is not so good as it ought to be."

"If to expose the fraud and imposition of monarchy, and every species of hereditary government—to lessen the oppression of taxes—to propose plans for the education of helpless infancy, and the comfortable support of the aged and distressed—to endeavor to conciliate nations with each other—to extirpate the horrid practice of war—

to promote universal peace, civilization and commerce—and to break the chains of political superstition, and raise degraded man to his proper rank—if these things be libellous, let me live the life of a Libeller, and let the name of Libeller be engraven on my tomb."

Thomas Paine was, at this time, being burnt in effigy in all parts of England, just as was a figure of the Pope in France. Reports of these burnings relate that "the proceedings were not interrupted by government officials"!

Paine's "trial" took place, as scheduled, on December 18, at the Guildhall, in London, before a "special jury of the Court of King's Bench." Sir Archibald Macdonald, Attorney General, appeared for the Crown, and Thomas Erskine for the defendant. To be selected by the government for a seat in a "special jury was considered, indeed, most enviable. A "special jury" which convicted was treated to a dinner, and each juryman was given two guineas. In cases of acquittal only one guinea was paid, and no dinner!

The jurymen, it need hardly be said, got their dinners and their two guineas.

Knowing that with a jury picked by the government—two guineas and a dinner—a verdict of "guilty" was almost certain, Paine wrote a letter from Paris to the English Attorney-General who was to

prosecute for the King. It was an extremely imprudent thing to do, but Paine wanted the jury to hear a few things that would not otherwise have been brought out. This was what Paine wrote:

"My necessary absence from your country affords the opportunity of knowing whether the prosecution was intended against Thomas Paine, or against the Rights of the People of England to investigate systems and principles of government; for as I cannot now be the object of the prosecution, the going on with the prosecution will show that something else was the object, and that something else can be no other than the People of England. . . . But I have other reasons than those I have mentioned for writing you this letter; and however you choose to interpret them they proceed from a good heart. The time, Sir, is becoming too serious to play with court prosecutions, and sport with national rights. The terrible examples that have taken place here upon men who, less than a year ago, thought themselves as secure as any prosecuting judge, jury, or Attorney-General can do now in England, ought to have some weight with men in your situation. That the government of England is as great, if not the greatest perfection of fraud and corruption that ever took place since governments began, is what you cannot be a stranger to; unless the constant habit of seeing it has blinded your sense. But though you may not choose to see it, the people are seeing it very fast, and the progress is beyond what you may choose to believe. Is it possible that you or I can believe, or that reason can make

any other man believe, that the capacity of such a man as Mr. Guelph, or any of his profligate sons, is necessary to the government of a nation? I speak to you as one man ought to speak to another; and I know also that I speak what other people are beginning to think. That you cannot obtain a verdict (and if you do it will signify nothing) without *packing a jury*, and we *both* know that such tricks are practised, is what I have very good reason to believe. . . . Do not then, Sir, be the instrument of drawing away twelve men into a situation that may be injurious to them afterwards. I do not speak this from policy, but from benevolence; but if you choose to go on with the process, I make it my request that you would read this letter in court, after which the judge and the jury may do what they please. As I do not consider myself the object of the prosecution, neither can I be affected by the issue one way or the other, I shall, though a foreigner in your country, subscribe as much money as any other man towards supporting the right of the nation against the prosecution; and it is for this purpose only that I shall do it. As I have not time to copy letters, you will excuse the corrections."

Paine's counsel, Thomas Erskine, was Attorney-General for the Prince of Wales, foremost of "Mr. Guelph's profligate sons," and he had no alternative but to claim as a forgery the letter which everyone felt to be genuine. He tried to prevent the reading of the letter but the judge decided adversely and read it in a clear voice until he reached the sentence which

mentioned the profligate sons. He winced at these words and shuffled through the sentence as best he could. While reading the letter the Attorney-General paused to say: "If I succeed in this prosecution, he (Paine) shall never return to this country, otherwise than *in vinculis*, for I will outlaw him." Erskine, in Paine's behalf, made a fine speech, upholding rights of thought and speech in England, closing with the following fable:

"Constraint is the natural parent of resistance, and a pregnant proof that reason is not on the side of those who use it. You must all remember, gentlemen, Lucian's pleasant story: Jupiter and a countryman were walking together, conversing with great freedom and familiarity upon the subject of heaven and earth. The countryman listened with attention and acquiescence, while Jupiter strove only to convince him; but happening to hint a doubt, Jupiter turned hastily around and threatened him with his thunder. 'Ah, ha!' says the countryman, 'now, Jupiter, I know that you are wrong; you are always wrong when you appeal to your thunder.'

"This is the case with me. I can reason with the people of England, but I cannot fight against the thunder of authority."

Immediately the Attorney-General rose to reply, but he was interrupted by the foreman of the jury, who said: "My Lord, I am authorized by the jury

here to inform the Attorney-General that a reply is not necessary for them, unless the Attorney-General wishes to make it, or your Lordship." The Attorney-General sat down, and the jury rendered its verdict 'Guilty.'

"The Whole Proceedings on the Trial of an Information against Thomas Paine, for Libel upon the Crown, and Parliament, and upon the King," etc., "taken in short-hand by Joseph Gurney," was published in London, and "sold by Martha Gurney, 128 Holborn Hill, price: three shillings and six-pence," a pamphlet of 196 pages. Several other persons also reported, and published, the trial. One of these, entitled "The Trial of Thomas Paine for a Libel contained in the Second Part of 'Rights of Man' " was printed by C. and G. Kearsley, Fleet Street, London. The Kearsley shop was only two or three doors distant from the shop of J. S. Jordan, who printed the book for which Paine was prosecuted.

The trial of the author of "Rights of Man" inspired the publication of cartoons ridiculing Paine, and handbills lampooning the author. One of these cartoons * shows a man hanging on a gallows. The

* In the possession of the Thomas Paine National Historical Association, New York.

upright beam of the gallows bears the words "The Rights of This Man." In an upper corner of the sheet is a fanciful heraldic shield showing three stays, emblematic, no doubt, of Paine having in his youth been in the stay-making business. Peering at him from behind the scaffold is a horned head representing the devil. Beneath the picture are these words:

"The End of Pain; the Last Speech, Dying Words and Confession," etc. Then follows a long paragraph detailing the (imagined) execution of Paine. This cartoon was published in London.

There was at this time a scarcity of copper coins in England, and some "loyal" Britons in London struck tokens of penny, half-penny and farthing size, bearing designs and wording in derision of Paine. Several of these tokens show a man suspended on a gallows. One has a serpent and a dagger, the serpent decapitated. The head has a human face, the severed head being supposed to represent Paine. One of the coins shows Paine gibbeted, the inscription being, "The End of Pain"; on reverse, a monkey dancing, and the legend "We dance, Paine swings." These tokens passed current as the regular copper coins of the government (although they were not) in making change. Some persons who favored Paine's principles issued other tokens of a similar character, some

of them representing the Prime Minister Pitt dangling from a gallows.

At the conclusion of the trial mobs went through the streets singing "God save the king, and damn Tom Paine." "Jest books," being at that time at the height of their popularity, an enterprising, though unscrupulous, London printer published "Tom Paine's Jests, Being an Entirely New and Select Collection of Patriotic Bon-Mots, etc., on Political Subjects, by Thomas Paine and other supporters of the 'Rights of Man.' " It contained no "jests of Thomas Paine on political, or other subjects" but it produced revenue for its publisher.

For a good many years the government continued its policy of aiding; if not openly, at least, surreptitiously, anything done to the detriment of Paine. Although there were laws which would have prevented the circulation, as pennies, half-pennies and farthings, of the copper coins struck by private individuals which were designed to deride Paine, there is no evidence that the government took any action to prevent their use as currency. It has been claimed that when Paine was found "guilty of libelling the Crown" (!) and outlawed for publishing "Rights of Man," the government encouraged the numerous burnings of straw effigies of Paine. Whether or not

this is true there is no doubt that strenuous efforts were made to suppress Paine's works and to discredit the author. The outlawing of Paine was followed by a reign of terror in England. Many publishers were fined and imprisoned for printing and selling Paine's works. Some were even banished to Botany Bay for seditious utterances, one of these latter being Thomas Muir who was sentenced to fourteen years for "sedition" in planning a convention in Edinburgh similar to the French Convention. H. D. Symonds, London, was sentenced to two years' imprisonment and £20 fine for publishing "Rights of Man," and £100 fine and two years' imprisonment for "Letter to the Addressers," with sureties in £1000 for three years, and imprisonment until the fine be paid and the sureties given. William Holland was awarded one year in prison and fined £100 for selling "Letter to the Addressers." J. Ridgway, in London, was sentenced to one year in prison and £100 fine for "Rights of Man"; Daniel Holt, four years prison and £50 fine; Richard Peart, "Rights of Man" and "Letter to Addressers" three months prison; William Belcher, three months for the "Letter" and "Rights of Man." The printer of the *Manchester Herald* earned seven indictments for paragraphs in his paper, and six different indictments for selling

six different copies of Paine's works. Fische Palmer was sentenced to seven years' transportation. Clio Rickman, prosecuted by the government for publishing Paine's works (two of them written by Paine in Rickman's home), was so fortunate as to escape to Paris. The prosecutions above mentioned are only a few of the many actions brought against those who published or sold Paine's writings.

The gentry demonstrated their loyalty to the corrupt government, and their support of aristocracy, by nails imbedded in the heels of their shoes with the initials "T. P.," so that they trample Paine and his principles.

English potteries made jugs bearing a portrait of Paine and the lines "Observe the wicked and malicious man, Projecting all the mischief that he can," and others embellished with a picture of a serpent with Thomas Paine's head. Other "Paine jugs" were also made. Two of these jugs were shown in the Thomas Paine exhibition held in London in 1896.

CHAPTER XXVIII

The Fall of the Girondins

Marat's Hostility to Paine....Paine's Friends....A Letter to Danton....Marat Makes Speeches....Paine Thinks of Home.... A Letter to Jefferson....Robespierre Demands Action Against Foreigners....The Procession to the Guillotine....Charlotte Corday

PAINE'S dearest hopes were now centered in the success of the French Revolution and the new Republic. He had set his heart upon accomplishments by the Nation Convention which would benefit humanity in general. Hopeful, enthusiastic Paine! It was not long before he saw all his humanitarian projects demolished.

Instead of a peaceable gathering of men intent upon the building of a noble structure, where had stood the rotten edifice of the French monarchy, Paine every day now saw only tremendous conflicts and fierce discussions which were accomplishing nothing for the benefit of mankind, conflicts inspired by lust for power.

As is so often the case, the body had promptly divided itself into two parties, the Girondins, who were by far the more intelligent and humane group,

and the Mountain,* which falsely alleged that the Girondins had royalist tendencies.

Marat singled out Paine as an especially dangerous and undesirable person to occupy a seat in the Convention. While he no doubt appreciated Paine's devotion to the Republic, he could see that Paine was weary of the strife and bickering which now obscured the great revolutionary objectives. He feared Paine's influence and determined to crush him. Paine's ardent republicanism might block his road to a dictatorship, so he boldly resolved to get him out of the way as soon as possible. Paine was not without friends in the Convention, but what was their strength in that mad time compared with the power of the fire-eating Marat?

A cordial friendship existed between Paine, Brissot, Verginaud, Condorcet, Danton and other members of the Convention, but some of the other members were prejudiced against Paine for the reason that he was a foreigner, and did not speak French. Paine no doubt felt keenly his inability to converse with all of his fellow-members, but he had long consultations with Brissot, who had visited America and spoke English fluently, and with Condorcet and Danton,

* So-called because they had the upper rows in the seats of the Convention.

who were equally conversant with Paine's mother tongue.

Marat, who frankly disliked all Englishmen, had made no secret of the fact that he craved the rôle of dictator. In a speech on April 16, Foucrede announced that "Marat has formally demanded a dictatorship."

Marat was reported to have said that "it is necessary to massacre all the foreigners, especially the English"; a rather reckless speech for Marat to make, since he was himself a foreigner, having been born in Neufchâtel, Switzerland! Marat denied having made such a statement. Paine wrote to Marat on May 6, 1793, but the letter has not reached the French national archives, and what the author said in his communication remains unknown. That he wrote such a letter on the date given is known from the last paragraph of an interesting letter Paine wrote to Danton. This is the letter:

"PARIS, May 6th, 2nd year of the Republic (1793).

"CITOYEN DANTON:

"As you read English, I write this letter to you without passing it through the hands of a translator. I am exceedingly disturbed at the distractions, jealousies, discontents and uneasiness that reign among us, and which, if

they continue, will bring ruin and disgrace on the Republic. When I left America in the year 1787, it was my intention to return the year following, but the French Revolution, and the prospect it afforded of extending the principles of liberty and fraternity through the greater part of Europe, have induced me to prolong my stay upwards of six years. I now despair of seeing the great object of European liberty accomplished, and my despair arises not from the combined foreign powers, not from the intrigues of aristocracy and priestcraft, but from the tumultuous misconduct with which the internal affairs of the present revolution is conducted.

"All that now can be hoped for is limited to France only, and I agree with your motion of not interfering in the government of any foreign country, nor permitting any foreign country to interfere in the government of France. This decree was necessary as a preliminary toward terminating the war. But while these internal contentions continue, while the hope remains to the enemy of seeing the Republic fall to pieces, while not only the representatives of the departments but representation itself is publicly insulted, as it has lately been and now is by the people of Paris, or at least by the tribunes, the enemy will be encouraged to hang about the frontiers and await the issue of circumstances.

"I observe that the confederated powers have not yet recognized Monsieur, or D'Artois, as regent, nor made any proclamation in favor of any of the Bourbons; but this negative conduct admits of two different conclusions. The one is that of abandoning the Bourbons and the war together; the other is that of changing the object of the war

and substituting a partition scheme in the place of their first object, as they have done by Poland. If this should be their object, the internal contentions that now rage will favor that object far more than it favored their former object. The danger every day increases of a rupture between Paris and the departments. The departments did not send their deputies to Paris to be insulted, and every insult shown to them is an insult to the departments that elected and sent them. I see but one effectual plan to prevent this rupture taking place, and that is to fix the residences of the Convention, and of the future assemblies, at a distance from Paris.

"I saw, during the American Revolution, the exceeding inconvenience that arose by having the government of Congress within the limits of any municipal jurisdiction. Congress first resided in Philadelphia, and after a residence of four years it found it necessary to leave it. It then adjourned to the State of Jersey. It afterwards removed to New York; it again removed from New York to Philadelphia, and after experiencing in every one of these places the great inconvenience of a government, it formed the project of building a town, not within the limits of any municipal jurisdiction, for the future residence of Congress. In any one of the places where Congress resided, the municipal authority privately or openly opposed itself to the authority of Congress, and the people of each of those places expected more attention from Congress than their equal share with the other States amounted to. The same thing now takes place in France, but in a far greater excess.

"I see also another embarrassing circumstance arising in Paris of which we have had full experience in America.

I mean that of fixing the price of provisions. But if this measure is to be attempted it ought to be done by the municipality. The Convention has nothing to do with regulations of this kind; neither can they be carried into practice. The people of Paris may say they will not give more than a certain price for provisions, but as they cannot compel the country people to bring provisions to market, the consequence will be directly contrary to their expectations, and they will find dearness and famine instead of plenty and cheapness. They may force the price down upon the stock in hand, but after that the market will be empty.

"I will give you an example. In Philadelphia we undertook, among other regulations of this kind, to regulate the price of salt; the consequence was that no salt was brought to market, and the price rose to thirty-six shillings sterling per bushel. The price before the war was only one shilling and sixpence per bushel; and we regulated the price of flour (farine) till there was none in the market, and the people were glad to procure it at any price.

"There is also a circumstance to be taken into the account which is not much attended to. The assignats are not of the same value as they were a year ago, and as the quantity increases the value of them will diminish. This gives the appearance of things being dear when they are not so in fact, for in the same proportion that any kind of money falls in value articles rise in price. If it were not for this the quantity of assignats would be too great to be circulated. Paper money in America fell so much in value from this excessive quantity of it, that in the year 1781 I gave three hundred paper dollars for one pair of worsted

stockings. What I write you upon this subject is experience, and not merely opinion.

"I have no personal interest in any of these matters, nor in any party disputes. I attend only to general principles.

"As soon as a constitution shall be established I shall return to America; and be the future prosperity of France ever so great, I shall enjoy no other part of it than the happiness of knowing it. In the mean time I am distressed to see matters so badly conducted, and so little attention paid to moral principles. It is these things that injure the character of the Revolution and discourage the progress of liberty all over the world.

"When I began this letter I did not intend making it so lengthy, but since I have gone thus far I will fill up the remainder of the sheet with such matters as occur to me.

"There ought to be some regulation with respect to the spirit of denunciation that now prevails. If every individual is to indulge his private malignacy or his private ambition, to denounce at random and without any kind of proof, all confidence will be undermined and all authority be destroyed. Calumny is a species of treachery that ought to be punished as well as any other kind of treachery. It is a private vice productive of public evils; because it is possible to irritate men into disaffection by continual calumny who never intended to be disaffected. It is therefore, equally as necessary to guard against the evils of unfounded or malignant suspicion as against the evils of blind confidence. It is equally as necessary to protect the characters of public officers from calumny as it is to punish them for treachery or misconduct. For my own part I shall hold it a matter of doubt, until better

evidence arises than is known at present, whether Dumouriez has been a traitor from policy or from resentment. There was certainly a time when he acted well, but it is not every man whose mind is strong enough to bear up against ingratitude, and I think he experienced a great deal of this before he revolted. Calumny becomes harmless and defeats itself when it attempts to act upon too large a scale. Thus the denunciation of the Sections [of Paris] against the twenty-two deputies [Girondists] falls to the ground. The departments that elected them are better judges of their moral and political characters than those who have denounced them. This denunciation will injure Paris in the opinion of the departments because it has the appearance of dictating to them what sort of deputies they shall elect. Most of the acquaintances that I have in the Convention are among those who are in that list, and I know there are not better men nor better patriots than they are.

"I have written a letter to Marat of the same date as this but not on the same subject. He may show it to you if he choose.

"Votre Ami,

"THOMAS PAINE.

"Citoyen Danton."

Speaking before a club which called itself the "Friends of Liberty and Equality," Marat proposed that the "Friends" register a vow pledging themselves to recall from the Convention "all of those faithless members who had betrayed their duties in

trying to save a tyrant's life." He said these deputies were "traitors, royalists or fools."

Paine had learned early in April of Marat's hostility to him. General Thomas Ward had told him of a conversation with Marat in which Marat had said: "Frenchmen are mad to allow foreigners to live among them. They should cut off their ears, let them bleed a few days, and then cut off their heads." How revolting this characteristic speech of the bloodthirsty Marat must have sounded to a man of Paine's sensitive humanitarianism!

In a letter to Jefferson, dated Paris, April 20, 1793, Paine shows plainly that he is disheartened with the way affairs are going in the Convention. He says that he relinquishes hope of the Revolution "extending liberty through the greatest part of Europe" and that he begins "to contemplate returning home." A post-script gives interesting news about his property in New Rochelle. This is the letter in full:

"My dear Friend,—The gentleman (Dr. Romer) to whom I entrust this letter is an intimate acquaintance of Lavater; but I have not had the opportunity of seeing him, as he had set off for Havre prior to my writing this letter, which I forward to him under cover from one of his friends, who is also an acquaintance of mine.

"We are now in an extraordinary crisis, and it is not altogether without some considerable faults here. Dumouriez, partly from having no fixed principles of his own, and partly from the continual persecution of the Jacobins, who act without either prudence or morality, has gone off to the enemy, and taken a considerable part of the army with him. The expedition to Holland has totally failed and all Brabant is again in the hands of the Austrians.

"You may suppose the consternation which such a sudden reverse of fortune has occasioned, but it has been without commotion. Dumouriez threatened to be in Paris in three weeks. It is now three weeks ago; he is still on the frontier near to Mons with the enemy, who do not make any progress. Dumouriez has proposed to re-establish the former Constitution, in which plan the Austrians act with him. But if France and the National Convention act prudently this project will not succeed. In the first place there is a popular disposition against it, and there is force sufficient to prevent it. In the next place, a great deal is to be taken into the calculation with respect to the enemy. There are now so many powers accidentally jumbled together as to render it exceedingly difficult to them to agree upon any common object.

"The first object, that of restoring the old monarchy, is evidently given up by the proposal to re-establish the late Constitution. The object of England and Prussia was to preserve Holland, and the object of Austria was to recover Brabant; while those separate objects lasted, each party having one, the Confederation could hold together, each helping the other; but after this I see not how a common object is to be formed. To all this is to be added

the probable disputes about opportunity, the expense, and the projects of reimbursements. The enemy has once adventured into France, and they had the permission or the good fortune to get back again. On every military calculation it is a hazardous adventure, and armies are not much disposed to try a second time the ground upon which they have been defeated.

"Had this Revolution been conducted consistently with its principles, there was once a good prospect of extending liberty through the greatest part of Europe; but I now relinquish that hope. Should the enemy by venturing into France put themselves again in a condition of being captured, the hope will revive; but this is a risk that I do not wish to see tried, lest it should fail.

"As the prospect of a general freedom is now much shortened, I begin to contemplate returning home. I shall await the event of the proposed Constitution, and then take my final leave of Europe. I have not written to the President, as I have nothing to communicate more than in this letter. Please to present to him my affection and compliments, and remember me among the circle of my friends. Your sincere and affectionate friend,

"THOMAS PAINE.

"P. S. I just now received a letter from General Lewis Morris, who tells me that the house and barn on my farm at N. Rochelle are burnt down. I assure you I shall not bring money enough to build another." *

* Although Paine assures Jefferson that he will not have sufficient money to build a house at New Rochelle to take the place of the original structure destroyed by fire, he seems to have had more funds than he supposed, or to have acquired some money after his return to America. At any rate he put up the frame cottage which stood until 1910 at the top of the hill, just south

Despite Marat's bloodthirst there is no evidence that he troubled Paine after receiving the letter Paine wrote him on May 6. It has been suggested that Danton and Marat compared their letters of the same date from Paine, and that Marat saw that Paine was anxious only to return to his beloved America, and hostility to him would be of no benefit.

Robespierre, on June 7, called upon the Convention for more drastic action against foreigners. A law was soon thereafter passed ordering their imprisonment. It was understood that this law should not apply to Paine and Anacharsis Clootz, but it was considered a sort of warning to them. The Mountain ran things as they pleased. It was futile to try to stem the tide. Condorcet fled from prosecution for having criticized the Constitution. Brissot and Duchatel also fled. In June, after many flights and arrestations, Paine was almost alone in "the Plain," beneath the Mountain. His beloved friends had started in procession toward the guillotine. He could not know when his turn for the block would come.

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of the present Paine Avenue. It passed into the possession of persons indifferent to Paine's memory and was moved to a new location and given a name ("Huguenot House") which misleads those unfamiliar with its history. It has also been changed considerably, and is scarcely recognized as the Paine cottage by those who, like the writer, knew the house on the crest of the hill.

Condorcet, Brissot, Verginaud, Gensonné, Duchatel —all his comrades were gone—comrades to whom Paine was devotedly attached. The skies looked black indeed.

On the night of July 13, eve of Bastille Day, anniversary of the destruction by the people of the monstrous prison, a beautiful young woman, with fanatic intensity of purpose flashing in her eyes, knocked at the door of a house, No. 44 rue de l'Ecole de Médicine, in Paris, the home of Marat. She was admitted, and went directly to his rooms.

Fair Charlotte found Marat in a bathtub, paper and pencil in his hands, calmly engaged in making out a list of Girondists to be put to death! Few words had been spoken when Charlotte produced a dagger from beneath her cloak, and buried it to the hilt in the heart of "the People's friend, Marat"!

Brave Charlotte! She will live in history as one of the great liberators of that period.

When brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal Charlotte said "I killed one man to save a hundred-thousand, a villain to save innocents, a savage wild beast to give repose to my country."

Four days after Marat was killed, a beautiful girl, born, like Marat, in the Neufchâtel district of Switzerland, was carted to the guillotine in the Place de la

Revolution,* and executed. And that was the end of Charlotte Corday!

The name of Thomas Paine was, in all probability, among those that Marat had written on his bathtub list for the executioner.

* Now the famous Place de la Concorde, in Paris, the largest public square in the world.

CHAPTER XXIX

Daily Life in Paris

Paine Lives in Mme. de Pompadour's House...."Forgetfulness"....Paine's Description of his Quarters....A Coterie of Friends....Mary Wollstonecraft, Mme. Roland, Clio Rickman....The Day's Routine....A Social Call from Samson, Public Executioner....Paine's Lost Essay on Robespierre.

PAINE was living at this time in a house in the Faubourg St. Denis, No. 63, on the right bank of the river. The house had formerly been the residence of Madame de Pompadour, mistress of dissolute Louis XV., grandfather of the king for whose wretched life Paine put his own in jeopardy before the Convention. Here, where the monarch's favorite wrote decrees for the king, and gave memorable frolics in her garden, Paine gathered his little circle of republican friends, and discussed "decrees" for the benefit of the people. Paine described his lodgings in this old house in a very interesting essay, which he entitled "Forgetfulness." This he wrote for Lady Smyth, wife of his friend, Sir Robert Smyth. The house and garden are now out of existence, having been swept away some years ago to make room for a great railway station, the Gare du Nord. The street was re-numbered, and 63 is now on the opposite side

—the west side of the street. This is what Paine wrote about his quarters in Paris at that time:

"They were the most agreeable, for situation, of any I ever had in Paris, except that they were too remote from the Convention, of which I was then a member. But this was recompensed by their being also remote from the alarms and confusion into which the interior of Paris was then often thrown. The news of those things used to arrive to us, as if we were in a state of tranquillity in the country. The house, which was enclosed by a wall and gateway from the street, was a good deal like an old mansion farm-house, and the court-yard was like a farm yard, stocked with fowls,—ducks, turkies and geese; which, for amusement, we used to feed out of the parlor window on the ground floor. There were some hutches for rabbits, and a sty with two pigs. Beyond was a garden of more than an acre of ground, well laid out, and stocked with excellent fruit trees. The orange, apricot and green-gage plum were the best I ever tasted; and it is the only place where I saw the wild cucumber. The place had formerly been occupied by some curious person.

"My apartments consisted of three rooms; the first for wood, water, etc.; the next was the bedroom; and beyond it the sitting room, which looked into the garden through a glass door; and on the outside there was a small landing place railed in, and a flight of narrow stairs almost hidden by the vines that grew over it, by which I could descend into the garden without going down stairs through the house. . . . I used to find some relief by walking alone

in the garden, after dark, and cursing with hearty good-will * the authors of that terrible system that had turned the character of the Revolution I had been proud to defend. I went but little to the Convention, and then only to make my appearance, because I found it impossible to join in their tremendous decrees, and useless and dangerous to oppose them. My having voted and spoken extensively, more so than any other member, against the execution of the king, had already fixed a mark upon me; neither dared any of my associates in the Convention to translate and speak in French for me anything I might have dared to have written. . . . Pen and ink were then of no use to me; no good could be done by writing, and no printer dared to print; and whatever I might have written, for my private amusement, as anecdotes of the times, would have been continually exposed to be examined, and tortured into any meaning that the rage of party might fix upon it. And as to softer subjects, my heart was in distress at the fate of my frends, and my harp hung upon the weeping willows.

"As it was summer, we spent most of our time in the garden, and passed it away in those childish amusements that serve to keep reflection from the mind,—such as marbles, Scotch hops, battledores, etc., at which we were all pretty expert. In this retired manner we remained about six or seven weeks, and our landlord went every evening into the city to bring us the news of the day and the evening journal."

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* Paine speaks only metaphorically when he refers to "cursing with hearty good-will." Those who knew him have left their testimony that he never used profanity.

The interesting coterie of Paine's friends who gathered in the garden for recreation and the pleasurable intercourse of conversation, included Mary Wollstonecroft, author of "A Vindication of the Rights of Women"; the beautiful Madame Roland, who is remembered chiefly for her fine epigram on the crimes committed in the name of liberty; M. Roland, Joel Barlow, Captain Imlay, Mr. and Mrs. Christie and Nicholas Bonneville.

There were always, too, in the company, some refugees from England, principally those who were being prosecuted or persecuted for publishing Paine's works. Paine's intimate friend and disciple, Rickman, was one of these in the summer of 1793. Concerning this period Rickman has left us the following interesting reminiscence of Paine and his circle in Paris:

"He usually rose about seven. . . . After breakfast he usually strayed an hour or two in the garden, where he one morning pointed out the kind of spider whose web furnished him with the first idea of constructing his iron bridge; a fine model of which, in mahogany, is preserved in Paris. The little happy circle who lived with him will ever remember those days with delight: with these select friends he would talk of his boyish days, played at chess, whist, piquet, or cribbage, and enliven the moments by many interesting anecdotes: with these he would play at

marbles, Scotch hops, battledores, etc.: on the broad and fine gravel walk at the upper end of the garden, and then retire to his boudoir, where he was up to his knees in letters and papers of various descriptions. Here he remained till dinner time; and unless he visited Brissot's family, or some particular friend, in the evening, which was his frequent custom, he joined again the society of his favorites and fellow-boarders, with whom his conversation was often witty and cheerful, always acute and improving, but never frivolous. Incorrupt, straightforward, and sincere, he pursued his political course in France, as everywhere else, let the government or clamor or faction of the day be what it might, with firmness, with clearness, and without a shadow of turning."

Another memory of the days in the house on the Faubourg St. Denis is to be found in this letter written by Paine to his friend, Lady Smyth, of the little "parliament" which met in the garden.

"I went into my chamber to write and sign a certificate for them, which I intended to take to the guard house to obtain their release. Just as I had finished it, a man came into my room, dressed in the Parisian uniform of a captain, and spoke to me in good English, and with a good address. He told me that two young men, Englishmen, were arrested and detained in the guard house, and that the section (meaning those who represented and acted for the section) had sent him to ask me if I knew them, in which case they would be liberated. This matter being soon settled between us, he talked to me about the

Revolution, and something about the 'Rights of Man,' which he had read in English; and at parting offered me, in a polite and civil manner, his services. And who do you think the man was who offered me his services? It was no other than the public executioner, Samson, who guillotined the King and all who were guillotined in Paris, and who lived in the same street with me."

There was something more than grim in the call of the executioner upon Paine and his offer of his "services." Paine had been fortunate enough so far to escape any "services" from the public executioner, whose politeness at parting was not without a certain grisly suggestiveness.

If Paine were not on Marat's little list of Girondins that he wished decapitated, he was, as we shall see, later to be selected for Samson's "services," and only by the rarest good fortune did he happen to escape them!

Paine was, as a matter of fact, so overrun by visitors —a good many of them mere adventurers—at the Faubourg St. Denis house, that he found it necessary to engage other quarters also, in the Philadelphia Hotel. Having the two addresses enabled him to evade lion-hunters, spies, and others who only annoyed him. There was continued Paine's little parliament of the world.

With Marat out of the way Robespierre was again in control. And Robespierre was not timid in exercising his power. Paine wrote an essay on Robespierre but it has been lost unfortunately, and we can know Paine's opinion of him only from casual remarks.

CHAPTER XXX

Paine's Arrest

Beginning Work on a Great Book....Gendarmes Search Paine's Rooms....They Conduct Him to Joel Barlow's Hotel ...."Citizen" Barlow Searched....The Report of the Gendarmes...."The Age of Reason," Part I Given to Barlow.... Paine and Clootz Taken to the Luxembourg Prison.... Robespierre Goes to the Guillotine....Writ Accusing Thomas Paine....Expulsion from the Convention...."For the Interests of America"....An Unseen Enemy?

SEEING the constant progress of the Terror, and realizing his utter inability to cope with the savagery to which sessions of the Convention had now descended, Paine refrained from attendance. His friends were falling day by day on the guillotine. The execution, October 31, 1793, of his comrades, the Girondins, convinced Paine that he also was marked for decapitation.

He felt that the blade of the guillotine already was suspended over him, and with that consciousness came a realization that no time was to be lost in carrying out any matter of importance that he had in contemplation. So the author, in his rooms at 63 Faubourg St. Denis, at once commenced work on his last great book, "The Age of Reason." (Vol. VIII.) The first and second paragraphs in the book explains his

reasons for deferring this important work for his last writing.

"It has been my intention, for several years past," wrote Paine, "to publish my thoughts upon religion; I am well aware of the difficulties that attend the subject, and from that consideration had reserved it to a more advanced period of life. I intended it to be the last offering I should make to my fellow-citizens of all nations, and that at a time when the purity of the motive that induced me to it, could not admit of a question, even by those who might disapprove the work.

"The circumstance that has now taken place in France of the total abolition of the whole national order of priesthood, and of every thing appertaining to compulsive systems of religion, and compulsive articles of faith, has not only precipitated my intention, but rendered a work of this kind exceedingly necessary, lest, in the general wreck of superstition, of false systems of government, and false theology, we lose sight of morality, of humanity, and of the theology that is true."

Paine spent the months of November and December, 1793, writing Part I of "The Age of Reason." Christmas Day found the author still engrossed in his work, but nearing its completion. The last paragraphs were written on the morning of December 27th. That evening he was arrested. Paine seems to have had some intimation that the arrest would come that day. His home in the Faubourg St. Denis was well known

to the authorities, although officially his residence was set down as "Philadelphia House, Passage des Petits Pères"—both houses being on the right bank of the river which runs through the city. He surmised that he would be sought at Philadelphia House, so there he went and there he was arrested in the early morning hours. The party of gendarmes—five or six of them—searched Paine's bedroom at the hotel for papers, but found none. Paine expressed a wish to be taken to the Great Britain Hotel, in the rue Jacob, where lived his friend, Joel Barlow, before he was conducted to prison. This they were willing to do, and the party started for Barlow's hotel, which was a couple of miles distant, being on the left bank of the river, and not far from the Luxembourg prison, the famous palace of royalty which had been turned into a prison during the revolution.

"Citizen" Barlow was asked if he had any of Paine's papers concealed in his rooms and, of course, declared he had none. He was requested by the police to open all of his cupboards that they might ascertain what was in them. They were opened in the presence of Paine, and, no papers being found, the men "perceived that it was a subterfuge on the part of Citizen Thomas Paine, who wished only to transfer himself to the house of Citizen Barlow, his native

friend." The above quotation is from a lengthy report of the arresting party, signed by the various members, and also by Barlow and Paine. The report concludes with the statement that the captive author was then requested to follow the party to jail, to which he complied without any difficulty."

The report tells of a visit to Paine's lodgings in the Faubourg St. Denis, where "a scrupulous examination was made of all the papers there gathered" and goes on to say that "none of them were found suspicious, neither in French nor in English."

Paine turned over to Barlow his manuscript of Part I, "The Age of Reason," with the request that Barlow take it to the printer. The guards glanced at the manuscript, saw that it was merely an essay on theology, and made no objection to Barlow taking it.

The party started for the Luxembourg prison, picking up on the way Anacharsis Clootz, another of the Girondin group of the Convention. Benoit, who was in charge of the jail, received the party and gave Martin and Lamy, Deputy-Secretaries of the Committee of General Surety and Public Safety, the following receipt for the prisoners:

"I have received from the Citizens Martin and Lamy, Deputy-Secretaries to the Committee of General Surety of the National Convention, the Citizens Thomas Payne and

Anacharsis Clootz, formerly Deputies; by order of the said Committee.

"At the Luxembourg, this day 8th Nivose, 2nd year of the French Republic, One and Indivisible.

"Signed: BENOIT, *Concierge.*"

Never did any man live more unselfishly for the benefit of his fellow-man than this man Paine who was now placed in a room, or cell, on the ground floor, damp and cold. In the same cell were confined three other men, Joseph Vanhuile, of Bruges; and Michael and Robbins Bastini, of Louvain. It was an especially frigid winter, the prison had little or no heat, and the inmates suffered greatly from the cold. Poor Clootz was lodged in another part of the prison. He, too, was a Girondin member of the Convention, also under arrest for the crime of being a "foreigner." He was, like Paine, "slated" for the guillotine. Unlike Paine, however, he was actually beheaded about a year after his incarceration.

Robespierre met his fate on the guillotine July 29, 1793. In his notebook, now in the French National Archives, was found this entry (written in French, of course): "Demand that a writ accusing Thomas Payne be issued, in the interests of America as much as of France." *

* "Demander que Thomas Payne soit décréte d'accusation pour les intérêts de l'Amerique autant que de la France."

The French seem to have misspelled Paine's name persistently, for I have found the same spelling—"Payne"—in all the documents, letters, etc., written in French which have come under my observation. The documents in the National Archives concerning Paine's arrest and imprisonment all bear the same perverted spelling. Perhaps it was easier for them to pronounce Paine's name correctly when they spelled it "Payne."

It was left to Bourdon de l'Oise to carry out Robespierre's order. Bourdon, who has been called one of the most savage of the Terrorists, was never more emphatic than when on the day before Christmas he denounced Paine, and demanded his expulsion from the Convention. He was forthwith, as ordered by Robespierre, "accused in the interests of America as much as of France"!

Paine, in the seclusion of his lonely lodgings, hard at work on his "Age of Reason," received on Christmas Day news of Bourdon's denunciation of him and his expulsion from the Convention. It meant, in all probability, that he would soon follow his Girondin friends who had been sacrificed on the guillotine. Cheerful news, indeed, for Christmas Day!

"The Age of Reason" was yet uncompleted. His "testament" must be finished. Never did an author

so hasten his pen. "Conceiving, after this," Paine wrote, "that I had but a few days of liberty, I sat down and brought the work to a close as speedily as possible."

Paine was, of course, greatly puzzled to understand the reasons underlying his arrest and impending execution. Especially was he at a loss to comprehend why he should be placed in jeopardy "for the interests of America"! He little suspected any conspiracy against him. He had been well acquainted with Robespierre but never heard from him a word which would indicate hostility. Robespierre had consulted him frequently through the summer months, and had always been, to all appearances, friendly. Now he is thrust into prison "for the interests of America." Paine suspected some unseen enemy lurking behind Robespierre.

CHAPTER XXXI

A Great Man Deserted by His Friends

Morris Made Minister to France....His Jealousy of Paine.... England and France at War....92 Captured American Ships ....Morris Chided by Paine....The Ship's Captains Turn to Paine for Aid....A Successful Petition....Morris Humiliated ....Morris' Letter to Jefferson....Paine's Innocence of Intrigues Against Morris....A Letter from Paine to Barrère.... Morris Lets Paine Languish in Prison....Paine's Appeal to Washington and Jefferson Unavailing....Americans in Paris Petition on Paine's Behalf....The Reply of the Convention.

NOW comes on the scene Gouverneur Morris, U. S. Minister to France. He and Thomas Paine had never been friends, though they had worked together —for very different reasons—to save the life of the French king. Morris' deliberate neglect of his duty, as Minister from this country, to aid Americans in trouble abroad, nearly brought about Paine's death in prison.

Gouverneur Morris had been American Minister in France since 1792. His appointment aroused opposition in the Senate but that body finally passed the President's selection by a vote of 16 to 11, and Morris entered upon his European career.

A casual reading of the entries in Morris' diary indicates hardly more than a jealousy of the famous

republican author, but the depth of that jealousy and the reasons for it are made apparent by an examination of the events of this period. The journals of Morris show the two men on friendly terms. Morris has Paine at his table to dinner, and obtains information from him.

When war broke out between England and France in the spring of 1793, Morris, who seems to have felt that America had much to gain by an alliance with Britain, was anxious to rid America of her treaty obligations to France. This attitude he expressed frequently in letters to Jefferson, the Secretary of State.

Soon Morris had an opportunity to carry out this design. Ninety-two captured American ships were brought into Bordeaux. They were not allowed to reload and go to sea for fear that their cargoes should fall into the hands of the British. Morris called to the attention of the French government this violation of the treaty with America, but he also wrote Jefferson that he would leave it to them in Philadelphia to insist on the observance of the treaty, or to accept the "unfettered condition" in which the violation of the treaty by France left them.

The troubles of the American captains was a most urgent matter, however, and correspondence with Philadelphia was very slow in the eighteenth century.

The captains did not suspect that Morris, Minister of this country, was pleased with an opportunity to abrogate the treaty with France, and being exasperated with Morris' indifference about aiding them, they turned to Paine, as the most eminent American in Paris. In fact, all through this period, Paine had so much more influence with the French government than Morris did, that he was constantly appealed to by Americans in France.

Finding himself unable to impress Morris with the necessity of some prompt action for the relief of the American captains, Paine bluntly inquired "if he did not feel ashamed to take the money of the country and do nothing for it." The American Minister angrily repulsed the captains when they again called on him on August 20, but he afterwards wrote to the French Minister about their complaint:

"I do not pretend," he said, "to interfere in the internal concerns of the French Republic, and I am persuaded that the Convention has had weighty reasons for laying upon Americans the restriction of which the American captains complain. The result will nevertheless be that this prohibition will severely aggrieve the parties interested, and put an end to the commerce between France and the United States."

Morris' note might have poured a little oil on the troubled waters had the captains known that Morris had bothered himself to write it. Morris' bad manners were notorious. The captains went off, indignant, to see Paine. They proposed to draw up a public protest against the conduct of the American Minister. Paine, of course, advised them not to do this. He recommended, instead, a petition to the Convention. Such a petition was presented August 22. The captains said in this petition:

"We, who know your political situation, do not come to you to demand the rigorous execution of the treaties of alliance which unite us to you. We confine ourselves to asking for the present, to carry provisions to your colonies."

The Convention responded favorably and promptly.

That the first great benefit coming to Americans since his appointment should have been gained through Paine was humiliating to Morris, and it only added to the ill-will he had felt for Paine. His pretext for transferring to royal England our alliance with republican France was also taken away—at least in part.

Morris wrote to Jefferson a few days later and referred to the matter as mere "mischief," at the same

time belittling the success of the captains, which he says "only served an ambition so contemptible that I shall draw over it the veil of oblivion." Paine's "contemptible ambition" which Morris carefully conceals from Paine's friend, Jefferson, is revealed by Gouverneur Morris in this letter to Robert Morris (who was not a relative):

> "I suspected that Paine was intriguing against me, although he put on a face of attachment. Since that period I am confirmed in the idea, for he came to my house with Col. Oswald, and being a little more drunk than usual, behaved extremely ill, and through his insolence I discovered clearly his vain ambition."

Morris lived at Sainport, 25 miles from Paris. That Colonel Oswald should have lugged an intoxicated man all the way out there over the terrific roads of that day is simply incredible.

Entirely apart from the fact that Paine was not a drinker, and was known to be constitutionally unable to drink, Paine's private letters to friends show him to have been entirely unconscious of any intrigue against Morris. Paine had no desire to succeed Morris. His uppermost desire was to leave France and return to his beloved America. Instead of intriguing against Morris, Paine, in his ignorance of Morris'

intrigues, brought upon himself suspicion by continuing his intercourse with the Minister.

This letter from Paine to Barrère, the chief Committeeman of Public Safety, dated September 5, shows Paine shielding Morris while he is trying to do something for the American captains:

"I send you the papers you asked me for.

"The idea you have to send Commissioners to Congress, and of which you spoke to me yesterday, is excellent, and very necessary at this moment. Mr. Jefferson, formerly Minister of the United States in France, and actually Minister for Foreign Affairs at Congress, is an ardent defender of the interests of France. Gouverneur Morris, who is here now, is badly disposed towards you. I believe he has expressed the wish to be recalled. The reports which he will make on his arrival will not be to the advantage of France. This event necessitates the sending direct of Commissioners from the Convention. Morris is not popular in America. He has set the Americans who are here against him, as also the Captains of that Nation who have come from Bordeaux, by his negligence with regard to the affair they had to treat about with the Convention. *Between us* [*sic*] he told them: 'That they had thrown themselves into the lion's mouth, and it was for them to get out of it as best they could.' I shall return to America on one of the vessels which will start from Bordeaux in the month of October. This was the project I had formed, should the rupture not take place between America and England; but now it is necessary for me to be there as soon

as possible. The Congress will require a great deal of information, independently of this. It will soon be seven years that I have been absent from America, and my affairs in that country have suffered considerably through my absence. My house and farm buildings have been entirely destroyed through an accidental fire.*

"Morris has many relations in America, who are excellent patriots. I enclose you a letter which I received from his brother, General Lewis Morris, who was a member of the Congress at the time of the Declaration of Independence. You will see by it that he writes like a good patriot. I only mention this so that you may know the true state of things. It will be fit to have respect for Gouverneur Morris, on account of his relations, who, as I said above, are excellent patriots.

"There are about 45 American vessels at Bordeaux, at the present moment. If the English government wished to take revenge on the Americans, these vessels would be very much exposed during their passage. The American captains left Paris yesterday. I advised them, on leaving, to demand a convoy of the Convention, in case they heard it said that the English had begun reprisals against the Americans, if only to conduct as far as the Bay of Biscay, at the expense of the American government. But if the Convention determines to send Commissioners to Congress, they will be sent in a ship of the line. But it would be better for the Commissioners to go in one of the best American sailing vessels, and for the ship of the line to serve as a convoy; it could also serve to convoy the ships

* If the reader will turn to p. 312 he will find further information about Paine's house at New Rochelle and its destruction by fire.

that will return to France charged with flour. I am sorry that we cannot converse together, but if you could give me a rendezvous, where I could see Mr. Otto, I shall be happy and ready to be there. If events force the American captains to demand a convoy, it will be to me that they will write on the subject, and not to Morris, against whom they have grave reasons of complaint. Your friend, etc.

THOMAS PAINE."

As far as is known this is the only letter written by Paine to anyone in France about Gouverneur Morris. The letter reposes in the French National Archives. It is endorsed "Letter from Thomas Payne to Citizen Barrère." In it Paine actually brings forward an argument for Morris' retention—that if he returns to America he will make reports disadvantageous to France. The American Archives contain no letters which would justify Morris in his supposition that Paine was "intriguing" against him.

Morris put aside his ambassadorial functions to exercise treaty-making or rather treaty-breaking powers, letting the nation which had appointed him its Minister shift as best it might without an ambassador. That Morris was pleased inwardly if not outwardly when Paine was thrown into prison is evident from the fact that he made no move to reclaim him as an American citizen. He did nothing in Paine's

behalf. Paine's only chance for relief lay in communicating the facts of his arrest and imprisonment to his most powerful friends in America. But when no word came from Washington or Jefferson after ample time had elapsed for their communicating, Robespierre entered his memorandum that Paine should go to trial before the revolutionary tribunal.

Paine's friends in Paris drew up and signed the following petition in Paine's behalf to the Convention:

"Citizens Legislators!—The French nation has, by a universal decree, invited to France one of our countrymen, most worthy of honor, namely, Thomas Paine, one of the political founders of the independence and of the Republic of America.

"Our experience of twenty years has taught America to know and esteem his public virtues and the invaluable services he rendered her.

"Persuaded that his character of foreigner and ex-Deputy is the only cause of his provisional imprisonment, we come in the name of our country (and we feel sure she will be grateful to us for it), we come to you, Legislators, to reclaim our friend, our countryman, that he may sail with us for America, where he will be received with open arms.

"If it were necessary to say more in support of the petition which, as friends and allies of the French Republic, we submit to her representatives, to obtain the

liberation of one of the most earnest and faithful apostles of liberty, we would beseech the National Convention, for the sake of all that is dear to the glory and to the heart of freemen, not to give a cause of joy and triumph to the allied tyrants of Europe, and above all to the despotism of Great Britain, which did not blush to outlay this courageous and virtuous defender of Liberty.

"But their insolent joy will be of short duration; for we have the intimate persuasion that you will not keep longer in the bonds of painful captivity the man whose courageous and energetic pen did so much to free the Americans, and whose intentions we have no doubt whatever were to render the same services to the French Republic. Yes, we feel convinced that his principles and views were pure, and in that regard he is entitled to the indulgence due to human fallibility, and to the respect due to rectitude of heart; and we hold all the more firmly our opinion of his innocence, inasmuch as we are informed that after a scrupulous examination of his papers, made by order of the Committee of General Surety, instead of anything to his charge, enough has been found rather to corroborate the purity of his principles in politics and morals.

"As a countryman of ours, as a man above all so dear to the Americans, who like yourselves are earnest friends of Liberty, we ask you, in the name of that goddess cherished of the only two Republics of the world, to give back Thomas Paine to his brethren and permit us to take him to his country which is also ours.

"If you require it, Citizens Representatives, we shall make ourselves warrant and security for his conduct in France during the short stay he may make in this land.

"Signed:
W. Jackson, of Philadelphia. J. Russell, of Boston. Peter Whiteside, of Philadelphia. Henry Johnson, of Boston. Thomas Carter, of Newbury Port. James Cooper, of Philadelphia. John Willert Billopp, of New York. Thomas Waters Griffith, of Baltimore. Th. Ramsden, of Boston. Samuel P. Broome, of New York. A. Meadenworth, of Connecticut. Joel Barlow, of Connecticut. Michael Alcorn, of Philadelphia. M. Onealy, of Baltimore. John McPherson, of Alexandria [Va.]. William Haskins, of Boston. J. Gregory, of Petersburg, Virginia. James Ingraham, of Boston."

To this petition Vadier, who was then president of the Convention, made the following reply:

"Citizens: The brave Americans are our brothers in liberty; like us they have broken the chains of despotism: like us they have sworn the destruction of kings and vowed an eternal hatred to tyrants and their instruments. From this identity of principles should result a union of the two nations forever unalterable. If the tree of liberty already flourishes in the two hemispheres, that of commerce should, by this happy alliance, cover the poles with its fruitful branches. It is for France, it is for the United States, to combat and lay low, in concert, these proud islanders, these insolent dominators of the sea and the commerce of nations. When the sceptre of despotism is falling from the criminal hand of the tyrants of the earth, it is necessary also to break the trident which emboldens the insolence of these corsairs of Albion, these

modern Carthaginians. It is time to repress the audacity and mercantile avarice of these pirate tyrants of the sea, and of the commerce of nations.

"You demand of us, citizens, the liberty of Thomas Paine; you wish to restore to your hearths this defender of the rights of man. One can only applaud this generous movement. Thomas Paine is a native of England; this is undoubtedly enough to apply to him the measures of security prescribed by the revolutionary laws. It may be added, citizens, that if Thomas Paine has been the apostle of liberty, if he has powerfully co-operated with the American Revolution, his genius has not understood that which has regenerated France; he has regarded the system only in accordance with the illusions with which the false friends of our Revolution have invested it. You must with us deplore an error little reconcilable with the principles admired in the justly esteemed works of this republican author.

"The National Convention will take into consideration the object of your petition, and invites you to its sessions."

CHAPTER XXXII

Morris Plots Against Paine

The American Minister's False Report to Jefferson....The True Situation....Paine is Prisoner of Morris....Morris Writes Jefferson....Deforgues and Morris Conspire Together ....Defamation of Paine's Character....The French Archives Reveal the Facts....Paine Writes to Morris Demanding His Reclamation....A Man Without a Country....Robespierre Puts Paine on Trial.

THE petition on Paine's behalf by the eighteen Americans resident in Paris was referred by the Convention to the Committees of Public Safety and General Surety, then meeting in joint session. That body replied to the Americans that "their reclamation was only the act of individuals, without any authority from the American government."

There could be no misunderstanding the import of these words — the fate of Paine was in the hands of the American government, whether in Paris or in Philadelphia. The reclamation would have to be made by the American Minister. Paine's fate rested with Morris, as long as Morris represented the American government in France.

Morris had made no representations to the French government in behalf of Paine, and had not written to the government in America about the situation of

the patriot whose "Common Sense" brought about the birth of the United States.

Morris' first ministerial mention to Jefferson, Secretary of State, that Paine had been arrested and imprisoned, is contained in a letter, dated January 21, 1794, in which he speaks very lightly of the matter, and recommends that he be "not brought much into notice" or "the long suspended axe might fall on him." Morris tells Jefferson that he believes Paine thinks that he (the American Minister) should claim him as an American citizen. He refers to his birth (in England) and alleges that Paine was naturalized in France. Paine's imprisonment is, in Morris' opinion, so trivial a matter that the Minister to France introduces the subject with the words "Lest I should forget it, I must mention that Thomas Paine is in prison," etc.

This is the entire text of what Morris wrote Jefferson concerning Paine:

"Lest I should forget it, I must mention that Thomas Paine is in prison, where he amuses himself with publishing a pamphlet against Jesus Christ. I do not recollect whether I mentioned to you that he would have been executed along with the rest of the Brissotins if the advance party had not viewed him with contempt. I incline to think that if he is quiet in prison he may have the good luck to be forgotten, whereas, should he be brought much

into notice, the long suspended axe might fall on him. I believe he thinks that I ought to claim him as an American citizen; but considering his birth, his naturalization in this country, and the place he filled, I doubt much the right, and I am sure that the claim would be, for the present at least, inexpedient and ineffectual."

Morris was not regardful of veracity in penning the above letter to the American Secretary of State and we shall point out a few of these lapses.

In the first place, Morris knew that Paine was not amusing himself in prison publishing, or even writing, "a pamphlet against Jesus Christ." Paine's book "The Age of Reason" which, no doubt, Morris had in mind, contains, not merely nothing "against Jesus Christ," but includes, on the contrary, a noble and pathetic tribute to the Man of Nazareth. The suggestion that Paine was viewed "with contempt" in the Convention is not in keeping with the fact that he was eulogized by the President of the Convention, and there is no truth in the allegation that Paine had been naturalized in France.

That Paine was not "executed along with the rest of the Brissotins" was not due to any exertion by Morris in behalf of the author. Had Morris done anything for Paine's benefit at the time the Brissotins were sentenced to death and executed, October 31,

there would be evidence of it in the French National Archives, but there is none. Above all, Morris is importunate that Jefferson do nothing that would bring his friend, Paine, "into notice," "lest the long-suspended axe might fall on him." Silence regarding Paine must be maintained by the American government, 3000 miles away, as a merciful act to the author. It is evident that a word from Morris, representing the government of the United States in Paris, would have liberated Paine, but Morris never said the word. He must have known that truth is eternal and that the entire wretched story of an American Minister abroad having for his prisoner a distinguished American patriot, would become known, if not in his (the Minister's) lifetime, then at a later period. Documents in the French Archives have at last revealed the entire plot.

We come now to Morris' next letter to Jefferson, in the course of which we find, among other fables, the deliberate falsehood that Morris had claimed Paine as an American from the French government.

This was Morris' letter to Jefferson, dated March 6:

"I have mentioned Mr. Paine's confinement. Major Jackson—who, by the by, has not given me a letter from you which he says was merely introductory, but left it with the Comité de Sûreté Générale, as a kind of letter of

credence—Major Jackson, relying on his great influence with the leaders here, stepped forward to get Mr. Paine out of jail, and with several other Americans, has presented a petition to that effect, which was referred to that Committee and the Comité de Salut Public. This last, I understand, slighted the application as totally irregular; and some time afterwards Mr. Paine wrote me a note desiring I would claim him as an American, which I accordingly did, though contrary to my judgment, for reasons mentioned in my last. The Minister's letter to me of the 1st Ventose, of which I enclose a copy, contains the answer to my reclamation. I sent a copy to Mr. Paine, who prepared a long answer, and sent it to me by an Englishman, whom I did not know. I told him, as Mr. Paine's friend, that my present opinion was similar to that of the Minister, but I might, perhaps, see occasion to change it, and in that case, if Mr. Paine wished it, I would go on with the claim, but that it would be well for him to consider the result; that, if the Government meant to release him, they had already a sufficient ground; but if not, I could only push them to bring on his trial for the crimes imputed to him; seeing that whether he be considered as a Frenchman, or as an American, he must be amenable to the tribunals of France for his conduct while he was a Frenchman, and he may see in the fate of the Brissotins, that to which he is exposed. I have heard no more of the affair since; but it is not impossible that he may force on a decision, which, as far as I can judge, would be fatal to him: for in the best of times he had a larger share of every other sense than common sense, and lately the intemperate use of ardent spirits has, I am told, considerably impaired the small stock he originally possessed."

Deforgues, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, was, we now know, in collusion with Morris. The story is revealed by letters and documents in the French National Archives now open to inspection.

Let us examine Morris' letter to Jefferson: He speaks of Jackson and "several other Americans." This was indeed minimizing their importance, for the Americans who signed and presented a petition for Paine's release comprised practically all the Americans then in Paris.

Morris refers to "the crimes imputed to him" when no crimes were charged. Paine was arrested and imprisoned under a law against "foreigners." The officers that arrested him reported that they found his papers were entirely innocent. Morris, by his phrase about crimes imputed to Paine, is making Paine amenable to the laws of France, and making the matter one with which the United States government would not interest itself.

Morris changes Paine's nationality to suit his purposes. "While he (Paine) was a Frenchman" is, of course, ridiculous. Were it true that Paine had ever been "a Frenchman," he was a Frenchman when Morris pretended that he had claimed him as an American. The fact is that Paine had been excluded from the Convention and placed in prison for the

very reason that he was *not* a Frenchman. Morris sent to Philadelphia no word of the Convention's action.

Morris' allusion to "the fate of the Brissotins, to which he (Paine) is exposed" is artfully introduced to suggest a French hostility to Paine which did not exist. His purpose was to alarm Paine's friends and constrain them from applying to America for intercession in behalf of Paine.

What the Minister says about intemperance is simply defamation. The author's "Age of Reason," written during the months immediately preceding his imprisonment, is sufficient refutation of the calumny.

The intensity of Morris' hostility to Paine may be gauged by the last four or five lines of the letter to Jefferson.

Bad enough as are the facts adduced, it is necessary to say that the worst thing about Morris' letter is the deliberate suppression of information which might have helped Paine. Nothing is said in the letter about what had really happened, not a word about the eulogy of Paine by the President of the Convention—which would have refuted the allegation that Paine was held in contempt by the Convention—nothing is said to apprise Jefferson of the fact that Paine's fate had been placed in his (Morris')

hands when the petitioning group of Americans was reminded by the Committee that their application was unofficial—that is, that the matter rested with the American Minister. Morris finds it convenient to hide this under the phrase "slighted the application as totally irregular."

Worst of all the statements was Morris' deliberate falsehood in the assertion that he had claimed Paine as an American. This crafty fiction would, Morris knew, not only affect Jefferson, but would be immediately communicated to Washington, Edmund Randolph and others, and would paralyze all American efforts in behalf of the American prisoner. It not only succeeded in doing this, but news of it reaching Paris, killed further efforts by Paine's friends in the French capital.

The correspondence between Morris and Deforgues, carefully filed away in the National Archives of France, has only been brought to light in comparatively recent years. This is a letter from Morris to Deforgues:

"PARIS, 14th February 1794.

"SIR,—Thomas Paine has just applied to me to claim him as a citizen of the United States. These (I believe) are the facts which relate to him. He was born in England. Having become a citizen of the United States, he acquired great celebrity there through his revolutionary writings.

In consequence he was adopted as French citizen, and then elected Member of the Convention. His behavior since that epoch is out of my jurisdiction. I am ignorant of the reason for his present detention in the Luxembourg prison, but I beg you, Sir, if there be reasons which prevent his liberation, and which are unknown to me, be so good as to inform me of them, so that I may communicate them to the Government of the United States.—I have the honor to be, Sir, Your very humble servant,

"Gouv. Morris."

Here is a reply from Deforgues to Morris:

Paris, 1st Ventose, 2nd year of the Republic.
[February 19, 1794.]

"The Minister of Foreign Affairs to the Minister of the United States.

"In your letter of the 26th of last month you reclaim the liberty of Thomas Payne, as an American citizen. Born in England, this co-deputy has become successively an American and a French citizen. In accepting this last title, and in occupying a place in the Legislative Corps, he submitted himself to the laws of the Republic, and has renounced the protection which the right of the people and treaties concluded with the United States could have assured him.

"I am ignorant of the motives of his detention, but I must presume they are well founded. I shall nevertheless submit the demand you have addressed me to the Committee of Public Safety, and I shall lose no time in letting you know its decision.

"Deforgues."

The first statement in the French Minister's reply to Morris' communication shows the connivance of the two men. The reader cannot find in Morris' letter where he "reclaims the liberty of Thomas Payne as an American citizen." The only conjecture possible is that Deforgues found it only with the aid of Morris.

The American Minister unmistakably declares Paine to be a French citizen, and disclaims official recognition of his conduct as out of his jurisdiction.

Morris and Deforgues were great friends and confidants at this time because each had an axe to grind. Deforgues was ambitious to succeed Genet as Minister to the United States, and Morris wished the aid of Deforgues in his plans against Paine. Morris was living in Sainport, 27 miles from Paris, but had come to the city apparently to confer with Deforgues, because his note is dated Paris, February 14. Four days later Deforgues replied. That there was consultation between the two men is proved by the French Minister's writing of Paine "occupying a place in the Legislative Corps." As has been pointed out by Conway, "no uninspired Frenchman could have so described the Convention, any more than an American would have described the Convention of 1787 as 'Congress.'" The phrase Deforgues em-

ploys is intended for Philadelphia, where the Constitution recently adopted in France may be supposed to have been followed by the formation of a legislature, the members of which took an oath of allegiance. Such an oath was not required by the Convention. Deforgues—writing for Philadelphia—boldly announces that Paine is a French citizen, despite the fact that Paine was excluded from the Convention and thrown into prison on the ground that he was a "foreigner"!

Deforgues' letter is entirely too ingenious to have originated with the Frenchman. Morris, in response to the letter signed by Deforgues, declaring Paine a citizen of France and disclaiming jurisdiction over him, returned to his home at Sainport well-satisfied with his ministerial work in Paris. He now had an official opiate for Paine's friends in America and Paris —a certificate that he had "reclaimed the liberty of Thomas Paine as an American citizen." The alleged reclamation being suppressed, and copies of the certificate being forwarded to Jefferson and to Paine, the American Minister in Paris is credited with having performed his duty. The members of Washington's Cabinet, meticulous about the technicalities of citizenship, particularly concerning France, had to accept Deforgues' claim that Paine was not an American,

especially as the claim was fortified by the consent of Morris, and it was taken as final.

Morris, discovering in the preceding summer that he was not to be removed from his post as American Minister, became emboldened. It was a dangerous game he was playing; and we, in the twentieth century, marvel that he dared to undertake such things, but Morris was deep—very deep. He craftily protected himself in all his designs. Especially was he guarded in his letters to Jefferson. In a letter to Jefferson, September 22, 1793, he says in the quasi-casual way that was characteristic of the man when he was most deep, Morris wrote:

"By the by, I shall cease to send you copies of my various applications in particular cases, for they will cost you more in postage than they are worth."

Morris felt secure in what he was doing because Washington was confiding, Jefferson easy-going and the French Foreign Office as secret as a tomb. There was no danger that Morris' cleverly-worded letter to Deforgues would ever be exposed to the light. With Morris close at hand Deforgues seems to have been entirely satisfied to have the American Minister's letter to him described as a demand.

Paine little dreamt he was the prisoner of the American Minister, and on February 24 wrote to Morris:

"I received your letter enclosing a copy of a letter from the Minister of Foreign Affairs. You must not leave me in the situation in which this letter places me. You know I do not deserve it, and you see the unpleasant situation in which I am thrown. I have made an essay in answer to the Minister's letter, which I wish you to make ground of a reply to him. They have nothing against me—except that they do not choose I should be in a state of freedom to write my mind freely upon things I have seen. Though you and I are not on terms of the best harmony, I apply to you as the Minister of America, and you may add to that service whatever you think my integrity deserves. At any rate I expect you to make Congress acquainted with my situation, and to send to them copies of the letters that have passed on the subject. A reply to the Minister's letter is absolutely necessary, were it only to continue the reclamation. Otherwise your silence will be a sort of consent to his observations."

In his simplicity Paine was led into a trap by the opening statement of the letter which was signed by Deforgues. He supposed that a reclamation had actually been made. So he sent the Minister his argument to be used by Morris in an answer of his own. The Minister, being in a position to do as he pleased with Paine's argument, promptly buried it in the graveyard of his papers. For a century the letters of Morris and Deforgues printed in this chapter remained hidden in government files in the French Na-

tional Archives. They are now, however, accessible to students of that period of French history.

Morris did not know that Jefferson had, at the close of 1793, resigned the office of Secretary of State, and when the Minister's letter of March 6 arrived in America, late in June, it came to the hands of Edmund Randolph, his successor. Randolph wrote on June 25 to Washington, at Mount Vernon, informing the President that a letter had arrived from Morris concerning Paine. Randolph said: "He has demanded Paine as an American citizen," and he added that "the Minister holds him to be amenable to the French laws." A copy of the fictitious "reclamation" was, of course, not sent by Morris with his letter. No such reclamation having been made, Morris had to take the chance that the bare statement of his letter would be sufficient. With only Morris' false information before him, Randolph's hands were tied until such time as Deforgues sent the statement explaining the causes of Paine's detention which, it will be recalled, he would "lose no time" in forwarding. Without further knowledge it was impossible to deny the rights over Paine which were claimed apparently by the French government.

And so Morris, feeling perfectly secure, went gaily on his way, while Paine, recognized by every Ameri-

can statesman and by Congress as a founder of their Republic, remained unjustly a prisoner in Paris, and a man without a country—outlawed by his native country, imprisoned in France as a foreigner, and prevented by its Minister from returning to the country whose President had declared Paine's services to it pre-eminent! And the Americans in Paris, many of whom Paine personally had befriended, seemed powerless to help him! Joel Barlow said of Paine: "He was always charitable to the poor beyond his means, a sure friend and protector to all Americans in distress that he found in foreign countries; and he had frequent occasions to exert his influence in protecting them during the Revolution in France." The Americans in Paris knew Paine's worth and were deeply appreciative, but Morris had succeeded in thoroughly deceiving them about the situation. They were informed that they must await the action of the American government—about three thousand miles away, and the only means of communication, letters transported by sailing vessels—a government which was itself awaiting action in Paris, and alarmed by the American Minister's intimations of danger to the prisoner which might result from any agitation in his behalf; assured by the Minister that he was proceeding with the case, and forbidden to communi-

cate with Paine, they were brought to a state of helplessness. In the meantime, silent America on one hand and Americans in Paris eager to help but thwarted by the shrewd intrigues of the Minister, there stood the remorseless French Committee, prepared to strike or to release the prisoner, in obedience to any sign from the alienated ally, to soothe whom France was prepared to make any sacrifice.

Month after month passed without the arrival of any word of sympathy for Paine from the President of the United States or his Cabinet. When finally word came from America it brought increased indications that America was in treaty with England, and Washington disaffected towards France. In the circumstances Robespierre decided to delay no longer but to bring an accusation against Paine and put him on trial.

CHAPTER XXXIII

Monroe to the Rescue

Joel Barlow Has "The Age of Reason" Printed....Paine's Dedication....Deforgues in the Luxembourg....Paine Aids General O'Hara to Return to England....Paine's Story of His Imprisonment....A Narrow Escape from the Guillotine.... Correspondence with Lady Smyth....Lanthenas Urges Paine's Release....Paine Writes to the Committee of Public Safety.... Audibert Appeals to the Convention....Morris Replaced by Monroe as Minister....Paine Ill of a Fever....His Memorial to Monroe....Monroe Secures Paine's Release.

IT is curiously ironic that an American ex-clergyman should have been the person to arrange for the publication of "The Age of Reason," Paine's last work of great importance, and the work for which the champion of the rights of man was most bitterly attacked by church interests.

Joel Barlow, to whom Paine had entrusted his manuscript of this famous work when he was arrested and taken to prison, faithfully and promptly carried out his promise to the author.

Barlow had been a Congregational clergman but had renounced his churchly calling for a business career. In his youth he had studied law but he turned from Blackstone and briefs to theology. He wrote several hymns and adapted the psalms of David for

an organization with which he was affiliated. His interest in theology waned, however, and a visit to Europe confirmed him in his resolution to give up altogether his concern in matters theologic. Being much impressed with Volney's great work, "The Ruins of Empires," he made and published a translation of the book.

Now he took to Barrois, a printer in Paris, his imprisoned friend's manuscript. It was quickly put in type, proofs "pulled," and a final revision made. Toward the end of January the work was on the press. Barlow had assisted in the proof-corrections, and faithfully stood by until the work came from the printer's hands. This volume was Part I of "The Age of Reason," but the title page did not indicate that another part was to follow.

The dedication Paine wrote for the first part of "The Age of Reason" contains some profound and noble sentiments, which are still much quoted after the lapse of more than a century and a quarter.

This was Paine's dedication:

"To my fellow citizens of the United States of America.—I put the following work under your protection. It contains my opinion upon religion. You will do me the justice to remember that I have always strenuously supported the right of every man to his opinion,

however different that opinion might be to mine. He who denies to another this right makes a slave of himself to his present opinion, because he precludes himself the right of changing it. The most formidable weapon against errors of every kind is Reason. I have never used any other, and I trust I never shall.—Your affectionate friend and fellow citizen.

THOMAS PAINE."

Paine had not been long in the Luxembourg before Deforgues, the man who had conspired against him with Morris, was himself condemned to the prison. He was placed in a cell not far from Paine's, and it is not incredible that the author might have learned the story of the plot had the two men understood each other's language.

Every day prisoners were taken to the guillotine, some of them Paine's personal friends to whom he was warmly attached. Camille Desmoulins, editor of a Paris newspaper, who had led in the memorable attack upon the Bastille, was one of them. So, too, was Anacharsis Clootz, idealist, humanitarian. Danton was one day brought to the prison. He greeted Paine cordially, and as they clasped hands, Danton said: "That which you did for the happiness and liberty of your country I tried in vain to do for mine. I have been less fortunate but not less innocent. They

will send me to the scaffold; very well, my friend, I shall go gaily." He had not long to wait for the summons.

There were a good many English prisoners, among them General O'Hara, who, it will be remembered, participated in the British surrender at Yorktown, offering Cornwallis' sword to Rochambeau rather than to Washington. O'Hara was imprisoned with his suite, which included two physicians, Doctors Bond and Graham, who attended Paine when he was ill in prison. General O'Hara was without funds and Paine, whose money had not been taken from him when he was lodged in the prison, gladly assisted him with £200 to return to England. This was one of many cases of Paine's kindnesses to his fellow-prisoners.

Rickman records this anecdote of Paine's imprisonment:

"Paine, while in the Luxembourg prison and expecting to die hourly, read to Mr. Bond (surgeon of Brighton, from whom this anecdote came) parts of his *Age of Reason;* and every night, when Mr. Bond left him, to be separately locked up, and expecting not to see Paine alive in the morning, he [Paine] always expressed his firm belief in the principles of that book, and begged Mr. Bond should tell the world such were his dying sentiments. Paine further said, if he lived he should further prosecute

the work and print it. Bond added, Paine was the most conscientious man he ever knew."

Paine, in a memorandum published after his release from the Luxembourg, gives some interesting details of his imprisonment. He says:

"I was one of the nine members that composed the first Committee of Constitution. Six of them have been destroyed. Sieyès and myself have survived—he by bending with the times, and I by not bending. The other survivor [Barrère] joined Robespierre; he was seized and imprisoned in his turn, and sentenced to transportation. He has since apologized to me for having signed the warrant, by saying he felt himself in danger and was obliged to do it. Hèrault Séchelles, an acquaintance of Mr. Jefferson, and a good patriot, was my *suppleant* as member of the Committee of Constitution. . . . He was imprisoned in the Luxembourg with me, was taken to the tribunal and guillotined, and I, his principal, left. There were two foreigners in the Convention, Anacharsis Clootz and myself. We were both put out of the Convention by the same vote, arrested by the same order, and carried to prison together the same night. He was taken to the guillotine, and I was again left. . . . Joseph Lebon, one of the vilest characters that ever existed, and who made the streets of Arras run with blood, was my *suppleant* as member of the Convention for Pas de Calais. When I was put out of the Convention he came and took my place. When I was liberated from prison and voted again into the Convention, he was sent to the same prison and took

my place there, and he was sent to the guillotine instead of me. He supplied my place all the way through.

"One hundred and sixty-eight persons were taken out of the Luxembourg in one night, and a hundred and sixty of them guillotined next day, of which I knew I was to be one; and the manner I escaped that fate is curious, and has all the appearance of accident. The room in which I lodged was on the ground floor, and one of a long range of rooms under a gallery, and the door of it opened outward and flat against the wall; so that when it was open the inside of the door appeared outward, and the contrary when it was shut. I had three comrades, fellow prisoners with me, Joseph Vanhuile of Bruges, since president of the municipality of that town, Michael and Robbins Bastini of Louvain. When persons by scores and by hundreds were to be taken out of the prison for the guillotine it was always done in the night, and those who performed that office had a private mark or signal by which they knew what rooms to go to, and what number to take. We, as I have said, were four, and the door of our room was marked, unobserved by us, with that number in chalk; but it happened, if happening is the proper word, that the mark was put on when the door was open and flat against the wall, and thereby came on the inside when we shut it at night; and the destroying angel passed by it."

It was not until Paine had been set free by an actual reclamation of him as an American citizen, made by James Monroe, who succeeded Morris as Ambassador to France, that Paine learned the in-

teresting story about the chalk-mark on the door of his cell.

In his letter to Washington he speaks of it:

"I had been imprisoned seven months, and the silence of the executive part of the government of America (Mr. Washington) upon the case, and upon every thing respecting me, was explanation enough to Robespierre that he might proceed to extremities. A violent fever which had nearly terminated my existence was, I believe, the circumstance that preserved it. I was not in a condition to be removed, or to know of what was passing, or of what had passed, for more than a month. It makes a blank in my remembrance of life. The first thing I was informed of was the fall of Robespierre."

It is thought that perhaps Marhaski, the physician of the Luxembourg, was attending Paine in his cell when the chalk-mark was made on the door, and that perhaps he had something to do with the placing of the mark in such a way that Paine escaped death. If this was the fact Paine never knew it, or he would surely have mentioned it.

A very vivid picture of the horror of life in the Luxembourg at this time is given in this further quotation from Paine's letter to Washington:

"From about the middle of March (1794) to the fall of Robespierre, July 29, (9th of Thermidor), the state

of things in the prisons was a continued scene of horror. No man could count upon life for twenty-four hours. To such a pitch of rage and suspicion were Robespierre and his committee arrived, that it seemed as if they feared to leave a man to live. Scarcely a night passed in which ten, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty or more were not taken out of the prison, carried before a pretended tribunal in the morning, and guillotined before night. One hundred and sixty-nine were taken out of the Luxembourg one night in the month of July, and one hundred and sixty of them guillotined. A list of two hundred more, according to the report in the prison, was preparing a few days before Robespierre fell. In this last list I have good reason to believe I was included."

Robespierre himself went to the guillotine eventually—July 28, 1794—just as had the others. Paris, at this time, was literally drenched with blood.

A month before the end of Robespierre, the prisoners in the Luxembourg—those, at least, of Benoit's "children" who had enough life left in them to note the change—saw (June 19) a new jailor in charge and kind old Benoit gone. The new jailor, Gayard, a fellow of forbidding countenance, which did not belie him, had come to institute a new reign of terror in the palace where kings had held their merry fêtes, and where wretched prisoners now mourned. Government officials had complained that Benoit was kind to his "children"—as he was wont to term the poor

inmates of his jail—and he was removed and ordered to trial.*

Benoit—who has been remembered appreciatively by Paine in his writings—did not rigidly enforce prison rules about the communications of prisoners with their friends outside the walls; seeing, of course, that they were not of a political nature. A charming message came to Paine one day in a woman's delicate handwriting. It was a cheering note signed "A Little Corner of the World." Paine replied, and a correspondence ensued, both writers continuing the pseudonyms they adapted. To his fair correspondent Paine wrote the poem "From the Castle in the Air to the Little Corner of the World" (Vol. X, p. 321) and also his essay "Forgetfulness." (Vol. V: 301.)

Paine did not learn the identity of his correspondent until after his release from the prison. Then he discovered that she was a lady who had appealed to him for assistance for her husband, Sir Robert Smyth, an English banker in Paris, who had some altercation with the government. Sir Robert and Lady Smyth, and their daughters (one of whom married Charles Este, a banker in Paris) became warm friends of Paine, a friendship that lasted throughout Paine's

* Benoit was acquitted, but he was not restored to his position in the prison.

life. That Paine held the Smyths in very high regard is shown by this passage from a letter by Paine concerning the Smyth family, which is owned by the Thomas Paine National Historical Association, of New York:

"If, among all my friends there is a family of whom I can speak with more confidence than of another, it is the (Smyth) family of whom I am speaking, and the arrestation of any part of that family, knowing them as I do, and esteeming their merits, gives me pain."

The letter was written in Paris in the year 1800, and is addressed to Garet, a member of the Senate. Paine mentions that all the letters and papers of Madame Smyth have been seized. He requests that his letter concerning the Smyth family be shown to the First Consul (Napoleon Bonaparte). No part of this five-page letter has been published heretofore.

Besides the poem Paine wrote for Lady Smyth ("Castle in the Air to a Little Corner of the World"), Paine wrote in 1800, a poem which he addressed to Robert Smyth (Vol. X, p. 322).

Sir Robert Smyth was an expatriate Englishman, then interested in republicanism. At a little banquet given by Paine, November 18, 1792, in the Philadelphia House in Paris, where Paine was arrested a

month later to be taken to prison, Sir Robert Smyth, Baronet, and Lord Edward Fitzgerald, formally renounced their titles. Sir Robert proposed the toast, "A speedy abolition of all hereditary titles and feudal distinctions."

Sir Robert died in 1802 (the year Paine returned to America) of illness brought on by his imprisonment under Napoleon.

Although Paine was neglected by the government in America, he was not forgotten by his old friends in France. F. Lanthenas, who had translated into French Paine's "Rights of Man," now also translated "The Age of Reason," Part I, and sent a copy to Merlin de Thionville, an important member of the Committee of Public Safety. Lanthenas wrote (August 7) the following letter about Paine to De Thionville:

"I think it would be in the well-considered interest of the Republic, since the fall of the tyrants we have overthrown, to re-examine the motives of Thomas Paine's imprisonment. That re-examination is suggested on too many and sensible grounds to be related in detail. Every friend of liberty familiar with the history of our Revolution, and feeling the necessity of repelling the slanders with which despots are loading it in the eyes of nations, misleading them against us, will understand these grounds. Should the Committee of Public Safety, having before it no founded charge or suspicion against Thomas Paine,

retain any scruples, and think that from my occasional conversation with that foreigner, whom the people's suffrage called to the national representation, and some acquaintance with his language, I might perhaps throw light upon their doubt, I would readily communicate to them all that I know about him. I request Merlin de Thionville to submit these considerations to the Committee."

The next day Paine sent—in French—the two letters which follow:

"Citizens, Representatives, and Members of the Committee of Public Safety: I address you a copy of a letter which I have to-day written to the Convention. The singular situation in which I find myself determines me to address myself to the whole Convention, of which you are a part.

"Thomas Paine.

"Maison d'Arrèt du Luxembourg,
Le 19 Thermidor, l'an 2 de la République,
une et indivisible."

"Citizen Representatives: If I should not express myself with the energy I used formerly to do, you will attribute it to the very dangerous illness I have suffered in the prison of the Luxembourg. For several days I was insensible of my own existence; and though I am much recovered, it is with exceeding great difficulty that I find power to write you this letter.

"But before I proceed further, I request the Convention to observe: that this is the first line that has come from me, either to the Convention, or to any of the Committees,

since my imprisonment,—which is approaching to eight months.—Ah, my friends, eight months' loss of liberty seems almost a life-time to a man who has been, as I have been, the unceasing defender of Liberty for twenty years.

"I have now to inform the Convention of the reason of my not having written before. It is a year ago that I had strong reason to believe that Robespierre was my inveterate enemy, as he was the enemy of every man of virtue and humanity. The address that was sent to the Convention some time about last August from Arras, the native town of Robespierre, I have always been informed was the work of that hypocrite and the partisans he had in the place. The intention of that address was to prepare the way for destroying me, by making the people declare (though without assigning any reason) that I had lost their confidence; the address, however, failed of success, as it was immediately opposed by a counter-address from St. Omer which declared the direct contrary. But the strange power that Robespierre, by the most consummate hypocrisy and the most hardened cruelties, had obtained rendered any attempt on my part to obtain justice not only useless but even dangerous; for it is the nature of Tyranny always to strike a deeper blow when any attempt has been made to repel a former one. This being my situation I submitted with patience to the hardness of my fate and waited the event of brighter days. I hope they are now arrived to the nation and to me.

"Citizens, when I left the United States in the year 1787, I promised to all my friends that I would return to them the next year; but the hope of seeing a Revolution happily established in France, that might serve as a model

to the rest of Europe, and the earnest and disinterested desire of rendering every service in my power to promote it, induced me to defer my return to that country, and to the society of my friends, for more than seven years. This long sacrifice of private tranquillity, especially after having gone through the fatigues and dangers of the American Revolution which continued almost eight years, deserved a better fate than the long imprisonment I have silently suffered. But it is not the nation but a faction that has done me this injustice, and it is to the national representation that I appeal against that injustice. Parties and factions, various and numerous as they have been, I have always avoided. My heart was devoted to all France, and the object to which I applied myself was the Constitution. The Plan which I proposed to the Committee, of which I was a member, is now in the hands of Barrère, and it will speak for itself.

"It is perhaps proper that I inform you of the cause assigned in the order of my imprisonment. It is that I am 'a foreigner'; whereas, the *foreigner* thus imprisoned was invited into France by a decree of the late national Assembly, and that in the hour of her greatest danger, when invaded by Austrians and Prussians. He was, moreover, a citizen of the United States of America, an ally of France, and not a subject of any country in Europe, and consequently not within the intentions of any of the decrees concerning foreigners. But any excuse can be made to serve the purpose of malignity when it is in power.

"I will not intrude on your time by offering any apology for the broken and imperfect manner in which I have expressed myself. I request you to accept it with the sincerity with which it comes from my heart; and I con-

clude with wishing fraternity and prosperity to France, and union and happiness to her representatives.

"Citizens, I have now stated to you my situation, and I can have no doubt but your justice will restore me to the Liberty of which I have been deprived.

"THOMAS PAINE.

"Luxembourg, Themidor 19th, 2d year of the French Republic, one and indivisible."

The Committee of Public Safety read the letter with interest, of course, but promptly hid it in the official files.

Paine's old friend, James Monroe, appointed Minister to France, in place of the recalled Morris, was in Paris, eager to take up his ministerial duties, but Morris was keeping him out of office.

Achille Audibert, who it will be remembered went to England to inform Paine of his election to the French Convention, and accompanied him to Paris, was, of course, entirely unacquainted with the plot which held the author a prisoner. He addressed the following appeal (August 20) to "Citizen Thuriot, member of the Committee of Public Safety":

"REPRESENTATIVE:—A friend of mankind is groaning in chains,—Thomas Paine, who was not so politic as to remain silent in regard to a man unlike himself, but dared to say that Robespierre was a monster to be erased from the list of men. From that moment he became a criminal;

the despot marked him as his victim, put him into prison, and doubtless prepared the way to the scaffold for him, as for others who knew him and were courageous enough to speak out.

"Thomas Paine is an acknowledged citizen of the United States. He was the secretary of the Congress for the department of foreign affairs during the Revolution. He has made himself known in Europe by his writings, and especially by his 'Rights of Man.' The electoral assembly of the department of Pas-de-Calais elected him one of its representatives to the Convention, and commissioned me to go to London, inform him of his election, and bring him to France. I hardly escaped being a victim to the English Government with which he was at open war; I performed my mission; and ever since friendship has attached me to Paine. This is my apology for soliciting you for his liberation.

"I can assure you, Representative, that America was by no means satisfied with the imprisonment of a strong column of its Revolution. Please to take my prayer into consideration. But for Robespierre's villainy this friend of man would now be free. Do not permit liberty longer to see in prison a victim of the wretch who lives no more but by his crimes; and you will add to the esteem and veneration I feel for a man who did so much to save the country amidst the most tremendous crisis of our Revolution.

"Greeting, respect, and brotherhood,

"ACHILLE AUDIBERT, of Calais.

"No. 216 Rue de Bellechase, Fauborg St. Germaine."

Audibert's letter, like other papers regarding Paine, was put to sleep in the official *oubliette*, where it had a century of repose, only to turn up finally in the National Archives.

Monroe found that Morris had done, and was doing, nothing about his reception by the committee as the new American Minister to France, and he was compelled finally to appeal directly to the Convention. He was received cordially, though formally, with the highest honors, on August 28, and Morris had nothing to do with the reception.

Monroe was in complete ignorance about Paine's plight. He was astounded to learn that he was a prisoner, so carefully had Morris concealed to America and to the Congress in Philadelphia the situation concerning the great American patriot.

Morris' victim in the Luxembourg was very ill with a fever when Monroe arrived, and it was not until he was recovering that he learned that Monroe had succeeded Morris. The situation at this time is revealed in Paine's own words:

"As soon as I was able to write a note legible enough to be read, I found a way to convey one to him [Monroe] by means of the man who lighted the lamps in the prison, and whose unabated friendship to me, from whom he never received any service, and with difficulty accepted

any recompense, puts the character of Mr. Washington to shame. In a few days I received a message from Mr. Monroe, conveyed in a note from an intermediate person, with assurance of his friendship, and expressing a desire that I should rest the case in his hands. After a fortnight or more had passed, and hearing nothing farther, I wrote to a friend [Whiteside], a citizen of Philadelphia, requesting him to inform me what was the true situation of things with respect to me. I was sure that something was the matter; I began to have hard thoughts of Mr. Washington, but I was unwilling to encourage him. In about ten days I received an answer to my letter, in which the writer says: 'Mr. Monroe told me he had no order (meaning from the President, Mr. Washington) respecting you, but that he (Mr. Monroe) will do everything in his power to liberate you, but, from what I learn from the Americans lately arrived in Paris, you are not considered, either by the American government or by individuals, as an American citizen.'"

Paine wrote his "Memorial to Monroe" (Vol. V, p. 77) upon receiving the letter from Whiteside. It is a remarkable document, written by an ardent American patriot and libertarian, caught in the meshes of late eighteenth century European politics, and it is well worthy of careful reading in the present era if we would learn details of Paine's situation at the time the Memorial was written. Paine, not realizing that he was in truth the prisoner of Morris, added to the Memorial this naïve postcript:

"As Gouverneur Morris could not inform Congress of the cause of my arrestation, as he knew it not himself, it is to be supposed that Congress was not enough acquainted with the case to give any directions respecting me when you left."

Poor Paine did not then know what now is known concerning his imprisonment.

Monroe replied September 18. He ascribed to mental confusion the notion that Paine was not an American, and he assured the prisoner of his determination to maintain his rights as a citizen of the United States. Monroe's letter continued:

"It is unnecessary for me to tell you how much all your countrymen, I speak of the great mass of the people, are interested in your welfare. They have not forgotten the history of their own Revolution, and the difficult scenes through which they passed; nor do they review its several stages without reviving in their bosoms a due sensibility of the merits of those who served them in that great and arduous conflict. The crime of ingratitude has not yet stained, and I trust never will stain, our national character. You are considered by them as not only having rendered important services in our own Revolution, but as being on a more extensive scale, the friend of human rights, and a distinguished and able advocate in favor of public liberty. To the welfare of Thomas Paine the Americans are not and cannot be indifferent. Of the sense which the President has always entertained of your merits, and of his

friendly disposition towards you, you are too well assured to require any declaration of it from me. That I forward his wishes in seeking your safety is what I well know; and this will form an additional obligation on me to perform what I should otherwise consider as a duty.

"You are, in my opinion, menaced by no kind of danger. To liberate you will be an object of my endeavors, and as soon as possible. But you must, until that event shall be accomplished, face your situation with patience and fortitude; you will likewise have the justice to recollect that I am placed here upon a difficult theatre, many important objects to attend to, and with few to consult. It becomes me in pursuit of those, to regulate my conduct in respect to each, as to the manner and the time, as will, in my judgment, be best calculated to accomplish the whole.

With great esteem and respect consider me personally your friend,

"JAMES MONROE."

Monroe's splendid letter, which in other circumstances would have reached Paine's hands the day upon which it was written, was not delivered to the prisoner until October 18, a month after it was penned by Monroe. Morris, in the meanwhile, was exhibiting a letter he had received from the President, which expressed continued confidence in him and apologized for his recall. The day after Paine received the letter from Monroe, Morris, who had left Paris,

and was hurrying to the Swiss border, reached the boundary line and got across on an irregular passport.

Monroe, having received no instructions from his government concerning Paine, and, little suspecting that the American patriot's imprisonment was entirely due to the plotting of his predecessor as Minister, groped for something from the American government upon which he could base a reclamation. He selected this paragraph from a letter, dated July 30, from Secretary Randolph—which letter made no mention of Paine:

"We have heard with regret that several of our citizens have been thrown into prison in France, from a suspicion of criminal attempts against the government. If they are guilty we are extremely sorry for it; if innocent we must protect them."

Monroe, on November 2, wrote the Committee of General Surety. His letter commenced with a statement of general principles and the limitations of ministerial protection to an imprisoned countryman. Then he proceeded, as follows with the case of Thomas Paine:

"The citizens of the United States cannot look back upon the time of their own revolution without recollecting among the names of their most distinguished patriots that

of Thomas Paine; the services he rendered to his country in its struggle for freedom have implanted in the hearts of his countrymen a sense of gratitude never to be effaced as long as they shall deserve the title of a just and generous people.

"The above-named citizen is at this moment languishing in prison, affected with a disease growing more intense from his confinement. I beg, therefore, to call your attention to his condition and to request you to hasten the moment when the law shall decide his fate, in case of any accusation against him, and if none, to restore him to liberty.

"Greeting and fraternity,

"MONROE."

Monroe, in this letter, made the first positive affirmation of Paine's American citizenship. Two days later—November 4—the prison doors were opened and Paine came out, a free man, recognized as an American citizen by the French government, which learned from Monroe's letter the high esteem in which he was held by the American people. Noble James Monroe—how different a character from his predecessor! Quoting from Monroe's letter reclaiming Paine, the identical words may very justly be applied to Monroe: "He has implanted in the hearts of his countrymen a sense of gratitude never to be effaced as long as they shall deserve the title of a just and generous people."

Through Monroe's efforts, and by that means only, was Paine restored to liberty, after an imprisonment of ten months and nine days.

Bentabole, who had moved Paine's expulsion from the French Convention, now signed his name to the order for Paine's release. The six other members of the Committee also signed. The wording of the order was brief, but it included a direction to remove the seals from Paine's papers, seals which had never been placed there—but this the Committee did not know, and had never troubled itself to ascertain. This was the order for Paine's release:

"Brumaire, 13th. Third year of the French Republic. —The Committee of General Surety orders that the Citizen Thomas Payne be set at liberty, and the seals taken from his papers, on sight of these presents.

"Members of the Committee (signed): Clauzel, Lesage, Senault, Bentabole, Reverchon Goupilleau de Fontenai, Rewbell.

"Delivered to Clauzel, as Commissioner."

The order for Paine's (the French spelled it Payne) liberation was proof that there was no accusation against him.

On November 7, Monroe wrote as follows to Secretary Randolph about his reclamation, and the liberation of Paine:

"He was actually a citizen of the United States, and of the United States only; for the Revolution which parted us from Great Britain broke the allegiance which was before due to the Crown, of all who took our side. He was, of course, not a British subject; nor was he strictly a citizen of France, for he came by invitation for the temporary purpose of assisting in the formation of their government only, and meant to withdraw to America when that should be completed. And what confirms this is the act of the Convention itself arresting him, by which he is declared a foreigner. Mr. Paine pressed my interference. I told him I had hoped getting him enlarged without it; but, if I did interfere, it could only be by requesting that he be tried, in case there was any charge against him, and liberated in case there was not. This was admitted. His correspondence with me is lengthy and interesting, and I may probably be able hereafter to send you a copy of it. After some time had elapsed, without producing any change in his favor, I finally resolved to address the Committee of General Surety in his behalf, resting my application on the above principle. My letter was delivered by my Secretary in the Committee to the president, who assured him he would communicate its contents immediately to the Committee of Public Safety, and give me an answer as soon as possible. The conference took place accordingly between the two Committees, and, as I presume, on that night, or on the succeeding day; for on the morning of the day after, which was yesterday, I was presented by the Secretary of the Committee of General Surety with an order for his enlargement. I forwarded it immediately to the Luxembourg, and had it carried into effect; and have the pleasure now to add that he is not

only released to the enjoyment of liberty, but is in good spirits."

Secretary of State Randolph, replying to Monroe, on March 8, 1795, wrote:

"Your observations on our commercial relations to France, and your conduct as to Mr. Gardoqui's letter, prove your judgment and assiduity. Nor are your measures as to Mr. Paine, and the lady of our friend [Lafayette] less approved."

CHAPTER XXXIV

Paine Convalesces

Paine Taken from Prison to Monroe's Home....A Long Illness....Distress at Washington's Neglect....Work on "The Age of Reason," Part II....Paine Returns to the Convention ....A Speech....Monroe's Letter About Paine....His Death Prematurely Announced in England....Washington's Secret Commercial Negotiations with England....Paine's Bitter Letter to Washington....Paine Denounces Jay's Treaty-making.

MONROE, upon the liberation of his eminent countryman, took him directly to his own home. There he and Mrs. Monroe nursed him back to life. The famous author was suffering from a very painful abscess in his side, which had succeeded a malignant fever. He was unconscious in prison for more than one month. He mentions this period in a "Letter to Washington." "A violent fever, which had nearly terminated my existence," he wrote, "was, I believe, the circumstance that preserved it. I was not in a condition to be removed, or to know of what was passing, or of what had passed, for more than a month. It makes a blank in my remembrance of life. The first thing I was informed of was the fall of Robespierre."

Distressing as was the pain caused by the abscess, a far more poignant pain was in his heart, the thought

that he had been abandoned by the government of the United States, by his warm friends and comrades of the "times that tried men's souls," now prominent figures in the government.

Paine was very ill at the home of the Monroes but he had competent medical attendance, and was there tenderly tended in his convalescence by Mrs. Monroe, who herself prepared delicacies for the invalid. He was too ill to come to the table.

Day followed day but no word came to Paine from his companions of American Revolutionary days. Most of all was the author distressed that he heard nothing from Washington, to whom he had dedicated Part I of "Rights of Man," and who had remained silent throughout Paine's long imprisonment, in daily danger of execution on the guillotine.

Paine did not neglect his literary work on days when the precarious condition of his health permitted it. He did his writing in an easy chair at his bedroom window, propped up by pillows.

Here, in the home of the American Minister who had saved him from death in prison, charged with the sole "crime" of being a "foreigner," Paine wrote his "Disseration on First Principles of Government" (Vol. V, p. 207), and here, too, he concluded his writing of "The Age of Reason, Part II" (Vol. VIII,

p. 103), which important work he had probably commenced while still a prisoner in the Luxembourg.

The latter of these two works is known the world over, but the first named has not had such wide recognition. It is, nevertheless, a notable example of Paine's political writing, and should be carefully considered in days when there are wide divergences from the original principles upon which a nation is founded. Here is a single, though important, quotation from Paine's pamphlet on "First Principles":

> "An avidity to punish is always dangerous to liberty. It leads men to stretch, to misinterpret and to misapply even the best of laws. He that would make his own liberty secure, must guard even his enemy from oppression; for if he violates this duty, he establishes a precedent that will reach to himself."

The French Convention having submitted to the consideration of the people a new Constitution, Paine was eager to attend and express his opinion upon it. He went to the Convention, July 7, and in his enfeebled condition, ascended the tribune, standing while a secretary read his speech. His appearance excited interest and emotion. This was Paine's speech:

"CITIZENS, The effects of a malignant fever, with which I was afflicted during a rigorous confinement in the Luxembourg, have thus long prevented me from attending at my post in the bosom of the Convention; and the magnitude of the subject under discussion, and no other consideration on earth, could induce me now to repair to my station. A recurrence to the vicissitudes I have experienced, and the critical situations in which I have been placed in consequence of the French Revolution, will throw upon what I now propose to submit to the Convention the most unequivocal proofs of my integrity, and the rectitude of those principles which have uniformly influenced my conduct. In England I was proscribed for having vindicated the French Revolution, and I have suffered a rigorous imprisonment in France for having pursued a similar line of conduct. During the reign of terrorism I was a prisoner for eight long months, and remained so above three months after the era of the 10th Thermidor. I ought, however, to state, that I was not persecuted by the *people*, either of England or France. The proceedings in both countries were the effects of the despotism existing in their respective governments. But, even if my persecution had orginated in the people at large, my principles and conduct would still have remained the same. Principles which are influenced and subject to the control of tyranny have not their foundation in the heart.

"If you subvert the basis of the Revolution, if you dispense with principles and substitute expedients, you will extinguish that enthusiasm which has hitherto been the life and soul of the Revolution; and you will substitute in its place nothing but a cold indifference and self-interest, which will again degenerate into intrigue, cunning and effeminacy."

Paine seems to have been slightly confused regarding the period of time he was a prisoner in the Luxembourg. In his speech he states that he was "a prisoner for eight long months," while he was in fact a prisoner for ten and a half months.

Under Mrs. Monroe's kindness and attention Paine recovered his health to some extent, and during the mid-summer was improved, though still weak. In September his symptoms were worse and the Monroes did not expect the author to live more than a month or two longer.

There is a letter, dated September 15, 1795, from Monroe to a relative, Judge Joseph Jones, of Fredericksburg, Va., which tells of Paine's condition at this time, and concludes with an expression of his esteem and appreciation of the distinguished man who was ill at his home.

After referring to the Judge's son and his tutor at St. Germain, near Paris, he says:

"As well on his account as that of our child, who is likewise at St. Germain, we had taken rooms there, with the intention of occupying for a month or two in the course of the autumn, but fear it will not be in our power to do so, on account of the ill-health of Mr. Paine, who has lived in my house for about ten months past. He was upon my arrival confined in the Luxembourg, and released on my application; after which, being ill, he has remained

with me. For some time the prospect of his recovery was good; his malady being an abscess in his side, the consequence of a severe fever in the Luxembourg. Latterly his symptoms have become worse, and the prospect now is that he will not be able to hold out more than a month or two at the furthest. I shall certainly pay the utmost attention to this gentleman, as he is one of those whose merits in our Revolution were most distinguished."

Newspapers in England were again reporting jubilantly that the author of the "seditious book" "Rights of Man" had died in Paris. About a year before, the same papers reported that Paine had been guillotined in Paris "to the delight of a vast concourse of spectators."

Part II of "The Age of Reason," completed under Monroe's roof, had been in the hands of the printer for more than a month when Monroe wrote of Paine's approaching end.

Paine was deeply hurt by the long continued silence of Washington, who had always been his loyal friend, and his comrade in the American Revolution. Washington in his letters to Paine had expressed not only his friendship but his great appreciation of the author's services in the founding of the American Republic. Month after month passed, with Paine in the French prison, in hourly danger of death, and no

word from the head of the American government, Paine's old friend.

Washington had been advised by Morris, his own appointee as Minister to France, that if Paine's imprisonment were much noticed, Paine's life might be endangered. Besides this, Morris pretended that he had made a reclamation in Paine's behalf.

But the salient fact in a consideration of the subject is that Washington, always deeply concerned with matters affecting the interests of his country, and never permitting anything to stand in the way of accomplishing what he believed would be of advantage to the United States, was, at the period of Paine's imprisonment, very deeply interested, the war with England being over, in securing a commercial treaty with England.

For this purpose he had sent John Jay to England to negotiate a treaty. Washington knew that the outlawed author of "Rights of Man" was the one person most antagonistic to the British government, and he felt that any move he made in Paine's behalf would offend England. So Paine must be sacrificed for the royal government against which Paine had written so fervently. In his writings Paine makes several allusions to the Jay treaty, as in his seventh "Letter to American Citizens." (Vol. X, p. 159.) He also

refers to it in his "Letter to Washington." (Vol. V, p. 139.)

To Paine, thoroughly mystified, and unable in prison to learn the facts, Washington's silence seemed nothing less than a sort of murder. We can get some idea of Paine's feelings at this time, his sense of humiliation and disgrace, that the American Republic of which he had been reverenced as a founder now ignored him and left him to die on the guillotine, or from disease, or starvation, when we read Paine's letter to Washington.

It is a bitter letter, but it must be considered as the outcry of a man ill unto death—betrayed, he believed, by a dear friend. In its anger we may easily see how deeply wounded was Paine's love for Washington. Recognizing all the facts in the case, as today we do, more than a century after both these historical figures are dead, we can more readily forgive Paine for his violent letter to his old comrade.

The anger felt in France over Jay's secret negotiations in England may be noted in a letter written by Paine from Monroe's home, March 6, 1795, to Samuel Adams, Governor of Massachusetts. The letter is one of the treasures of the manuscript department of the New York Public Library. It is interesting to note in the last paragraph of the letter Paine's use

of the expression "God bless you!"—interesting because the writer, a staunch Deist, was soon to be accused of Atheism—of course, by those who did not read "The Age of Reason."

"My Dear Friend,—Mr. Mozard, who is appointed Consul, will present you this letter. He is spoken of here as a good sort of man, and I can have no doubt that you will find him the same at Boston. When I came from America it was my intention to return the next year, and I have intended the same every year since. The case I believe is that, as I am embarked in the Revolution, I do not like to leave it till it is finished, notwithstanding the dangers I have run. I am now almost the only survivor of those who began this Revolution, and I know not how it is that I have escaped. I know, however, that I owe nothing to the government of America. The executive department has never directed either the former or the present Minister to enquire whether I was dead or alive, in prison or in liberty, what the cause of the imprisonment was, and whether there was any service or assistance it could render. Mr. Monroe acted voluntarily in the case, and reclaimed me as an American citizen; for the pretence for my imprisonment was that I was a foreigner, born in England.

"The internal scene here from the 31st of May, 1793, to the fall of Robespierre has been terrible. I was shut up in the prison of the Luxembourg [almost] eleven months, and I find by the papers of Robespierre that have been published by the Convention since his death, that I was designed for a worse fate. The following memor-

andum is in his own handwriting: "Démander que Thomas Paine soit décrété d'accusation pour les interêts de l'Amérique autant que de la France."

"You will see by the public papers that the successes of the French arms have been and continue to be astonishing, more especially since the fall of Robespierre, and the suppression of the system of Terror. They have fairly beaten all the armies of Austria, Prussia, England, Spain, Sardinia and Holland. Holland is entirely conquered, and there is now a revolution in that country.

"I know not how matters are going on your side the water, but I think everything is not as it ought to be. The appointment of G. Morris to be Minister here was the most unfortunate and the most injudicious appointment that could be made. I wrote this opinion to Mr. Jefferson at the time, and I said the same to Morris. Had he not been removed at the time he was I think the two countries would have been involved in a quarrel, for it is a fact, that he would either have been ordered away or put in arrestation; for he gave every reason to suspect that he was secretly a British Emissary.

"What Mr. Jay is about in England I know not; but is it possible that any man who has contributed to the Independence of America, and to free her from the tyranny of the British Government, can read without shame and indignation the note of Jay to Grenville? That the *United States has no other resource than in the justice and magnanimity of his Majesty*, is a satire upon the Declaration of Independence, and exhibits [such] a spirit of meanness on the part of America, that, were it true, I should be ashamed of her. Such a declaration may suit the

spaniel character of Aristocracy, but it cannot agree with manly character of a Republican.

"Mr. Mozard is this moment come for this letter, and he sets off directly.—God bless you, remember me among the circle of our friends, and tell them how much I wish to be once more among them.

"THOMAS PAINE."

CHAPTER XXXV

"The Age of Reason"

Publication of Part II....A Sensation Created....Purpose of the Book....Paine's Belief in God....His Rejection of Creeds ....Replies to "The Age of Reason"....Translation into Many Languages....First Publication in America....The Bishop of Llandaff.

AT Monroe's home Paine concluded his writing of "The Age of Reason," Part II, and in 1795 was published, in Paris, the first edition of this famous work. Part II bore, on the title-page, the words "Printed for the Author." The same year in which Part II was printed, editions were published of the two parts bound together.

"The Age of Reason" created a tremendous sensation. For writing this book, the work of a profoundly religious man—a Deist, defending the Deity in which he believed, Paine suffered persecution that extended from the date of the book's publication to the day of his death. It was Paine's ironic fate to be attacked as an Atheist for writing a work which, as the author tells us, was written expressly for the purpose of combatting Atheism at a time when—I quote Paine's own words—"the people of France were running headlong into Atheism, and I had the work trans-

lated and published in their own language to stop them in that career, and fix them to the first article of every man's creed, who has any creed at all—I believe in God." *

In considering Paine's religious writings, and the attacks upon "The Age of Reason," and its author, we must bear in mind that it is now more than 130 years since the work was published. The world has made great strides intellectually and religiously since then. The churches have to a great extent been humanized. In the course of the years many beliefs have been modified or abandoned altogether. The churches of today are not given entirely, as in Paine's time, to the promulgation of theological doctrines but foster also the idea of human service and helpfulness.

Jonathan Swift, who is probably best known as Dean Swift, the famous author of "Gulliver's Travels," dean of St. Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin (Protestant) wrote of the churches as "dormitories of the living as well as of the dead." "Men," Dean Swift said, "have enough religion to hate, but not enough to love."

Paine wished to humanize religion, and divest it of superstitions. He founded in Paris an ethical so-

* From Thomas Paine's "Letter to Samuel Adams, (Vol. VIII, p. 295.)

ciety, which promulgated a "religion of humanity." That was forty years before the French philosopher, Auguste Comte, used the phrase just quoted. Paine had coined this fine phrase long before, in the days of the American Revolution, employing it in his "Crisis VII."

"The Age of Reason" is an acute examination of the Bible by a profound and fearless thinker. Paine had reserved its publication "to a more advanced period of life" that it might be his testament and the last important work he should leave to the world.

"The Age of Reason" embodies some of the author's deepest thought in a strenuous career devoted to the betterment of mankind. Paine says in the beginning of his work:

> "It has been my intention, for several years past, to publish my thoughts upon religion. I am well aware of the difficulties that attend the subject; and, from that consideration, had reserved it to a more advanced period of life. I intended it to be the last offering I should make to my fellow-citizens of all nations; and that at a time when the purity of the motive that induced me to it could not admit of a question, even by those who might disapprove the work.
>
> "The circumstance that has now taken place in France, of the total abolition of the whole national order of priesthood, and of everything appertaining to compulsive sys-

tems of religion, and compulsive articles of faith, has not only precipitated my intention, but rendered a work of this kind exceedingly necessary; lest, in the general wreck of superstition, of false systems of government, and false theology, we lose sight of morality, of humanity, and of the theology that is true."

The author then frankly declares his belief "in one God, and no more," and he adds "and I hope for happiness beyond this life." He says, too,

"I believe in the equality of man; and I believe that religious duties consist in doing justice, loving mercy, and endeavoring to make our fellow creatures happy."

To make certain in the reader's mind that he does not believe many other things in which he placed no credence the writer adds:

"But, lest it should be supposed that I believe many other things in addition to these, I shall, in the progress of this work, declare the things I do not believe, and my reasons for not believing them."

Paine then declares his disbelief in the creeds of the various churches in these unequivocal words:

"I do not believe in the creed professed by the Jewish church, by the Roman church, by the Greek church, by the Turkish church, by the Protestant church, nor by any

church that I know of. My own mind is my own church.

"All national institutions of churches, whether Jewish, Christian, or Turkish, appear to me no other than human inventions, set up to terrify and enslave mankind, and monopolize power and profit."

The next paragraph is one of the finest statements Paine ever wrote:

"I do not mean by this declaration to condemn those who believe otherwise; they have the same right to their belief as I have to mine. But it is necessary to the happiness of man, that he be mentally faithful to himself. Infidelity does not consist in believing, or in disbelieving; it consists in professing to believe what he does not believe."

Shakespeare, in the first act of "Hamlet," brings out the same thought: "This above all: to thine own self be true."

All churches could benefit their congregations, mentally and morally, by displaying on tablets so that all might read, the paragraph from "The Age of Reason" which follows:

"It is impossible to calculate the moral mischief, if I may so express it, that mental lying has produced in society. When a man has so far corrupted and prostituted the chastity of his mind as to subscribe his professional belief to things he does not believe, he has prepared himself for the commission of every other crime. He takes

up the trade of a priest for the sake of gain, and, in order to qualify himself for that trade, he begins with a perjury. Can we conceive anything more destructive to morality than this?"

The strength of "The Age of Reason" lies in the intense seriousness of the author. It is manifest immediately that the writer of the book has made a most careful examination of his subject. Paine was an earnest student, and by no means the ribald scoffer his detractors have painted him. Of the great number of persons who wrote disparagingly of "The Age of Reason" very few read the book. They have repeated the denunciations of others, who had themselves only "heard" that the work was "atheistic!"

Only one of the many "replies" to "The Age of Reason" ever achieved any circulation and sale. The others were, we might say, still-born. A few copies were sold and then the book disappeared from view. The sole "reply" which survived a little while was the Bishop of Llandaff's "Apology for the Bible." The bishop's name was Richard Watson. The bishop seems to have been impressed by "The Age of Reason," for, in his reply, "An Apology for the Bible," he speaks of the "philosophical sublimity" he found in certain portions of the book. Despite the fact that Watson's reply was the only one that received any

serious notice, its life was short indeed. It has now been out of print for more than a century, and only occasionally does a copy turn up in book auctions, or second-hand shops.

Watson's "Apology," with its quotations from "The Age of Reason" greatly stimulated the circulation of Paine's book—hardly what the bishop expected or desired.

"The Age of Reason" is one of the few religious works of the eighteenth or of preceding centuries which has survived in unsectarian circulation. It has today a greater sale than it has had at any time since it was first published. It has been translated, and is published, in nearly all languages of any importance.

I have before me, as I write, copies of "The Age of Reason" in French, Russian, Swedish and Italian, all recent editions. I have also a copy in Yiddish—published in New York in 1922—and a letter I received recently from a Japanese friend in Tokio, a member of the Paine Association, informs me that he has translated "The Age of Reason" into Japanese, and that he expects soon to publish his translation, "which, I am hoping," he adds, "will enlighten my countrymen, who have been deluged with Christian superstitions."

What is now meant by enlightened Christians when they allude to Christianity is a very different thing from what was known as Christianity in Paine's time. A humanizing wave has passed through all the churches, and largely as a result of Paine's work.

In England some Unitarians published an expurgated version of "The Age of Reason, Part I," as a sermon, using for a text this quotation from Job XI, 7, "Canst thou by searching find out God?" It was printed anonymously in pamphlet form. It could be read today, as then, in any orthodox pulpit, and approved by the congregation.

Part I of "The Age of Reason" is chiefly astronomical. Paine had always been greatly interested in the study of astronomy, and in his youth attended astronomical lectures. It is interesting to note in Part I, twenty-one years in advance of Herschel's famous paper on the heavenly nebulæ, this comment of Paine:

> "The probability is that each of those fixed stars is also a sun, round which another system of worlds or planets, though too remote for us to discover, performs its revolutions."

It is interesting to note that "The Age of Reason" was first published in America by a religious house,

as a religious book. Parson Weems, Washington's old friend, who wrote a biography of our first President (and whom we may thank for the cherry-tree fable, and the yarn about Washington kneeling in the snow to pray), sold both "The Age of Reason" and the Bible on his journeys in Virginia. "The Age of Reason" still has some sale as a religious work, which it certainly is.

Paine's book, advocating a religion of humanity, can best be described as an uprising of the human heart against a religion of inhumanity.

The author's whole-hearted interest in his fellowman may be noted not only in a careful reading of his "Age of Reason" but in Paine's political writings. This declaration, made near the close of Paine's life, sums up simply his object in writing his books:

"As in my political works my motive and object have been to give man an elevated sense of his own character, and free him from the slavish and superstitious absurdity of monarchy and hereditary government, so, in my publications on religious subjects, my endeavors have been directed to bring man to a right use of the reason that God has given him; to impress on him the great principles of divine morality, justice and mercy, and a benevolent disposition to all men, and to all creatures; and to inspire in him a spirit of trust, confidence and consolation in his Creator, unshackled by the fables of books pretending to be the word of God."

Near the close of "The Age of Reason" Paine says:

"The Bible of the creation is inexhaustible in texts. Every part of science, whether connected with the geometry of the universe, with the systems of animal and vegetable life, or with the properties of inanimate matter, is a text for devotion as well as for philosophy—for gratitude as for human improvement. It will perhaps be said that, if such a revolution in the system of religion takes place, every preacher ought to be a philosopher. *Most certainly.* And every house of devotion a school of science. It has been by wandering from the immutable laws of science, and the right use of reason, and setting up an invented thing called revealed religion, that so many wild and blasphemous conceits have been formed of the Almighty. The Jews have made him the assassin of the human species, to make room for the religion of the Jews. The Christians have made him the murderer of himself, and the founder of a new religion, to supersede and expel the Jewish religion. And to find pretence and admission for these things they must have supposed his power and his wisdom imperfect, or his will changeable; and the changeableness of the will is the imperfection of the judgment. The philosopher knows that the laws of the Creator have never changed with respect either to the principles of science, or the properties of matter. Why then is it to be supposed they have changed with respect to man?"

Most of the "replies" to "The Age of Reason"—about thirty have been published—were "lifted" quite boldly from Bishop Watson's "Apology." The

Bishop evaded when he could not reply, and "The Age of Reason" still remains unanswered.

Only some fragments remain of a work Paine planned to be Part III of "The Age of Reason," and there is little more of his projected "Answer to the Bishop of Llandaff." In October, 1800, Paine was still writing on Part III and he mentions it in a letter to Jefferson. In Paine's Will he mentions having in manuscript Part III of "The Age of Reason" and also an "Answer to the Bishop of Llandaff." Upon returning to America in 1802 he had found the *odium theologicum* against him so strong, that he decided to postpone its publication.

I have already mentioned the probable loss by fire of these manuscripts, together with other valuable Paine papers and letters after Madame Bonneville, executrix of Paine's Will, reverted to Catholicism, and mutilated the manuscripts bequeathed to her. The publication of an answer to the Bishop's "Apology" was hardly necessary, for "The Age of Reason" had done its work, and most effectively. It probably shook even the Bishop's orthodoxy, for that became suspected, his promotion was barred, and after his death this bitter note (dated 1811) was found among his papers:

"I have treated my divinity, as I, twenty-five years ago, treated my chemical papers: I have lighted my fire with the labor of a great portion of my life."

CHAPTER XXXVI

Persecutions of Paine's Publishers

Richard Carlile Fights for Freedom of the Press in England....He Publishes "The Age of Reason"....He is Tried before a "Special Jury"....His Defense Suppressed....He Publishes a Report of His Mock Trial....Sentenced to Three Years' Imprisonment and a Fine of $7,500....He Studies in Prison....His Wife Shares His Cell....Arranging a Separation....His Imprisonment Extended to November 18, 1825

TIME has reduced "The Age of Reason" from a flag of popular radicalism to a comparatively conservative theological treatise, so far as its negations are concerned. But at the time of its publication in England, such a thing as freedom of expression in print was a dream yet to come true. Foremost among those who were bent on making it come true was a London publisher and intrepid reformer, Richard Carlile, who, in fighting for the freedom of the press between the years 1817 and 1834, was behind prison bars for periods that totaled nine years, seven months and one week.

It was an extremely hazardous thing at that period of English history to criticize even most mildly either State or Church. Carlile in his publications boldly defied both. The oppressive measures in force in England in 1817, backed by Lords Sidmouth, Castle-

reagh, Liverpool, Canning and others, and the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, inspired Carlile to take up the cudgels for a free press. At the instigation of the government associations had sprung up all over England with the avowed object of suppressing any and all propaganda aimed at a reform of Parliament. Thomas Paine's "Rights of Man" was the chief objective. Paine had been convicted of "high treason" and outlawed a quarter of a century before for publishing what has come to be regarded as the greatest political treatise ever written. The government prosecuted, convicted, imprisoned and even banished scores of persons for circulating Paine's book. The juries in all these cases were "packed" by the government and acquittals or disagreements were unknown.

William Cobbett, publisher of a radical journal known as "Cobbett's Register," had fled to America; William Hone, publisher of another radical weekly and a bookseller, flinched beneath governmental threats, and under pressure suppressed the sale of his book entitled "Parodies of the Book of Common Prayer." Other publishers bent before the dictum of authority and abandoned principles antagonistic to the Church or State.

William T. Sherwin, influenced by Paine's writings, had commenced the publication of his "Political Register," the most revolutionary of the several radical weeklies, but lost his courage as he saw one conviction follow another, and would consent to continue publication only upon Carlile's agreeing to become both editor and publisher. There was a further understanding that Carlile should assume entire responsibility for all matter that appeared in the paper.

Passing over the early government persecutions inflicted upon Carlile, we find him issuing an edition of Paine's theological works (including, of course, "The Age of Reason") and also a work entitled "Principles of Nature" by Elihu Palmer, the blind deistical preacher who lived and lectured in New York early in the nineteenth century. He was a friend of Paine, from whom he derived much inspiration, both for his writings and for his deistical lectures. In 1819 the English government prosecuted Carlile for publishing and selling the theological writings of Paine and Palmer, and the case was tried before a "special jury."

Before the commencement of the farce-"trial" Carlile received word that at least five of the jurors had publicly declared that they would hang him if they could, or give him a sentence of at least five years'

imprisonment on a fare of bread and water. The charge was "blasphemy," and the judge blandly declared to the jury that the truth or falsity of the ideas Carlile proclaimed did not matter. While he might, the judge said, communicate his ideas, his doubts and disbeliefs, "privately, silently and respectfully" by words of mouth, to publish such a work as "The Age of Reason" or the "Principles of Nature" that anybody might read, was indeed "gross blasphemy" and the defendant "plainly aimed at a breach of the peace"!

Carlile's defense was interrupted on the second day of the trial, and on the third day was entirely suppressed. Carlile, however, was not to be squelched so easily as the government anticipated; at the close of each day's proceedings he issued a full report, and it was sold on the streets in two-penny sheets. The sheets were headed "Full Account of Richard Carlile's Mock Trials." They sold more rapidly than the presses could turn them out. The government immediately condemned the sheets as indictable, and Carlile's wife was threatened for selling them in the Fleet Street shop. The sale nevertheless was continued, and it exceeded, as Carlile's daughter records in her biography of her father, "anything so far known in the annals of the bookselling business."

The mock trial also greatly stimulated the sale of other publications at Carlile's radical bookshop. All day long a stream of people passed in and out, exchanging their money for copies of the "blasphemous" works upon which the trial was based. Not only did the trial greatly increase the sales of Paine's Theological Works and Palmer's "Principles of Nature," but large numbers of other liberal books were sold.

Carlile received an ovation from crowds assembled outside the courthouse and before his bookshop on his way to and from the scene of the trials.

Not only did the champion of a free press acquaint the people with the facts of the trial in his daily two-penny sheets, but he continued in his weekly "Republican" a series of articles of most daring character. In addition to this he addressed open letters to his judge and the jury, arraigning them for the illegality of their conduct. These open letters he printed in large numbers and spread broadcast.

The trial came to a termination at the close of the third day. Carlile was sentenced to three years' imprisonment and a fine of £1,500 ($7,500). The sentence had hardly been pronounced when Carlile was handcuffed and taken a distance of 130 miles from London to Dorchester Gaol (jail), a long and arduous

journey by night in those days of primitive transportation. Carlile was not permitted to see his wife or children before leaving, and communication with his friends was also denied him.

With Carlile safe under lock and key 130 miles from his shop and friends, the "authorities" felt emboldened to descend upon his shop. This they did within a few days of Carlile's deportation to the jail. Everything in the shop was seized—the entire stock of books, pamphlets, etc., the furniture, shades—everything. The seizure was made on the pretext of securing the fines imposed upon Carlile; as a matter of fact, it was made in order to so cripple the prisoner that he could never pay them. The government hoped in this way to make Carlile a perpetual prisoner. As Mrs. Theophila Carlile Campbell says in her interesting life of her father, "This confiscation was no part of his sentence, be it remembered, but was an afterthought, and was performed by the power of might over right. This stock was thrown into a damp cellar or warehouse, and practically ruined. . . . The officers even took the money found in the money-drawer, although not one dollar resulting from this seizure was ever allowed in mitigation of his fines."

For one year Carlile was not allowed to see friends or relatives. Then the restriction was modified and

during certain hours he was permitted to receive visits from his wife, his children and his sisters. In a letter from Dorchester Gaol at this time he says: "Such has been the solitude of my confinement in this prison, and so little conversation have I had, that on attempting to speak, I have in a manner found my voice gone, and have been obliged to make a great effort to be heard. . . . I lie sleeping or reading on an average sixteen hours a day, and I walk about the room or sit in a chair as a relief, excepting the few hours I spend at the writing desk. I am sensible that this is a bad habit, but I have no alternative. As my situation is at present I am quite comfortable, and I attribute the closeness of my confinement to the pretended horror which clerical and fanatical magistrates profess to feel at what they call 'sedition' and 'blasphemy.' "

Carlile took advantage of the exceptional opportunity he had for research in making a very thorough study of religions—the Christian religion in particular. He obtained by purchase or by loan every obtainable work on these subjects that was authoritative and, with plenty of time on his hands, readily became a master of topics theological. In jail Carlile studied political economy, history, literature, etc.

Letters of encouragement poured in on Carlile from all parts of the country, many of them containing money to aid him in his fight for a free press.

Meanwhile the government improved its time—or to be more correct, *wasted its time*—threatening, arresting and releasing Jane Carlile, the prisoner's wife. In January, 1821, however, the "authorities" brought various indictments against her to a "trial." She was, of course, found guilty and sentenced to Dorchester Gaol. In the jail she shared her husband's cell. When Jane Carlile was taken to prison Richard received scores of letters from young men and women offering to take her place in the list of persecutions for opinion's sake, volunteering themselves as ready for business at the shop or for prosecution, it mattered not which.

Carlile's courageous sister, Mary Anne, was Jane's successor in the list. She had been in training for the part she was to play, both as publisher and bookseller, and as martyr to the great cause. Mary Anne ably conducted the book shop, republished some radical works and issued—all under the imprint of "M. A. Carlile, Publisher, 55 Fleet Street"—an "Appendix to the Theological Works of Thomas Paine." Mary Anne's career as a publisher was not long; the government saw to that. She in her turn went to jail,

only to be succeeded by the others who successively took her place at the Fleet Street shop.

While Carlile was in jail he published two weekly papers, the "Republican" and the "Lion." Subsequently he also published the "Prompter" and the "Gauntlet."

Carlile had married very young. He was but twenty-two years old when at the little town of Gosport, England, in 1813, he met a handsome young woman of thirty, well connected and capable. After a courtship of two months they "married in haste to repent at leisure." Within a week of their marriage Carlile realized that he had made a great mistake, that they were not at all suited to each other. Despite the all-too-evident incompatibility of temperaments, the couple tried to make the best of the situation, but early in 1819 they very wisely agreed to separate. Owing to Richard's imprisonment and the necessity of continuing the publishing business, the actual severance between them did not take place until 1832. Carlile records that during their united imprisonment at Dorchester practically the sole topic of conversation between them was separation. It was mutually agreed that this would take place whenever Carlile should be in a condition to make a sufficient settlement upon his wife. That time came in 1832.

Carlile settled an annuity upon his wife, allowed her to take all of their furniture and household goods and also five hundred dollars' worth of books. Jane Carlile was by no means the sort of person the reformer should have married, but when we recall that, despite her having no sympathy with his aims and ideas, she suffered a two years' imprisonment and bore two children to him in jail and fought the good fight with him in the days when her help was needed, we must consider her fairly entitled to the gratitude of all libertarians.

Jane Carlile had five children, three of whom reached maturity—Richard, Alfred and Thomas Paine Carlile. None followed in his father's footsteps. Carlile established them in business several times, but always disastrously. They inherited neither their mother's thrift nor their father's talents. The eldest son, Richard, came to the United States soon after his father's death in 1843. He settled in Wisconsin, not far from Milwaukee, and was at one time an assemblyman in that State. He died in 1855 of ship fever upon returning from a visit to London.

Carlile's sentence for publishing Paine's Theological Works and Palmer's "Principles of Nature" was only three years, but he was held a prisoner at Dorchester Gaol for six years, the additional three

years being exacted for his non-payment of the $7,500 fine. Carlile could no doubt have raised the amount necessary for the payment of the fine among the many friends that the staunch resistance he made to persecution had brought to his side, but, as a matter of principle, he would not give the government one penny, and he gladly suffered the additional three years in jail. Carlile was released November 18, 1825, and after a life of continued vicissitudes we find the libertarian crusader in 1842 taking a home at the corner of Fleet and Bouverie Streets, in London. There he was very ill for a brief time and there he died, February 10, 1843, declaring on his deathbed: "I am the same man I have always been; I have gone neither to the right nor to the left. My aim has been to accomplish one great purpose."

CHAPTER XXXVII

Paine's Last Days

Paine and the Bonnevilles....Jefferson Becomes Vice-President....A Plea for Freedom of the Seas....Letters to Jefferson as President....Paine Off to America....The Bonnevilles Follow....At Home in New Rochelle, N. Y.....An Unpublished Contemporary Letter About Paine...Paine's Life Attempted....He Suggests the Louisiana Purchase and the "Monroe Doctrine"....Paine's Poverty....A Hint to Jefferson Greeted With Silence....Paine Declared Not a Citizen in His Own Election District....Failing Health....Madame Bonneville Nurses Him Through His Final Illness....The Theologians Close in Around Him....He Re-Affirms His Deistic Faith....Death.

IT was a keen disappointment to Paine that he could not return to America with the Monroes. When his good friends left France for the United States, Paine took up his abode with his old friend, Nicolas de Bonneville, editor and publisher, and an enthusiastic devotee from youth of Paine's principles. Bonneville spoke English fluently. He printed several of Paine's works, including an edition in French of "The Age of Reason." One of the three Bonneville children had been named after Thomas Paine.

It was not with any feelings of pleasure that Paine heard in 1797 of the election of John Adams to the Presidency of his beloved country. He wrote Jeffer-

son, now Vice-President, congratulating him on having accepted that office, "for John Adams has such a talent for blundering and offending, it will be necessary to keep an eye over him." But Paine for the present dismissed from his mind public affairs. Napoleon, now predominant in France, had abandoned his plan of descending upon England. Bonneville spoke of him in his paper as a Cromwell, and was at once arrested and imprisoned. Paine thereupon visited his old friend of Luxembourg days, Vanhuile, now president of the municipality of Bruges, Belgium. Upon returning, he found Bonneville released from prison, but under the strict surveillance of Napoleon. His paper had been suppressed. The family was now in very reduced circumstances, and Paine, of course, determined to stand by them and continued to live at the Bonneville home.

Discouraged at the outlook for the formation of a United States of Europe, Paine turned his attention to the seas. It was at this time that he wrote his "Maritime Compact" (Vol. X, p. 161), including in it ten articles advocating neutral commerce in a proposal to be signed by the nations entering the "Unarmed Association" which he projected. This proposition corresponded to the one outlined by Paine in his letter "To the People of France, and to the

French Armies." It was translated by Bonneville, and was widely read in Europe. Paine sent a manuscript copy of it to Jefferson, who had it printed in America. His lengthy letter to Jefferson, accompanying the manuscript, appears in Vol. X, p. 81.

In a letter dated March 18, 1801, Jefferson, now President, informed Paine that he had placed the "Maritime Compact" in the hands of a printer to be published in pamphlet form, and that the American people were developing a more friendly disposition to France. He adds:

"You expressed a wish to get a passage to this country in a public vessel. Mr. Dawson * is charged with orders to the captain of the 'Maryland' to receive and accommodate you back if you can be ready to depart at such short warning. Rob. R. Livingston is appointed Minister Plenipotentiary to the Republic of France, but will not leave this [country] till we receive the ratification of the convention by Mr. Dawson. I am in hopes you will find us returned generally to sentiments worthy of former times. In these it will be your glory to have steadily labored, and with as much effect as any man living. That you may long live to continue your useful labors and to reap the reward in the thankfulness of nations, is my sincere prayer. Accept assurances of my high esteem and affectionate attachment."

* Hon. John Dawson, a Virginia Congressman and friend of Jefferson, on a mission to France.

Following are pertinent extracts from letters Paine wrote to Jefferson at this time:

Paris, June 9, 1801. "Your very friendly letter by Mr. Dawson gave me the real sensation of happy satisfaction, and what served to increase it was that he brought it to me himself before I knew of his arrival. I congratulate America on your election. There has been no circumstance with respect to America since the times of her Revolution that excited so much attention and expectation in France, England, Ireland and Scotland as the pending election for President of the United States, nor any of which the event has given more general joy:

"I thank you for the opportunity you give me of returning by the 'Maryland,' but I shall wait the return of the vessel that brings Mr. Livingston."

Paris, June 25, 1801. "The 'Parliamentaire,' from America to Havre, was taken in going out, and carried into England. The pretence, as the papers say, was that a Swedish Minister was on board for America. If I had happened to have been there, I suppose they would have made no ceremony in conducting me on shore.

Paris, March 17, 1802. "As it is now Peace, though the definitive Treaty is not yet signed, I shall set off by the first opportunity from Havre or Dieppe, after the equinoctial gales are over. I continue in excellent health, which I know your friendship will be glad to hear of.—Wishing you and America every happiness, I remain your former fellow-laborer and much obliged fellow-citizen.

The letter to Consul Rotch, dated July 8, 1802, is probably Paine's last letter from Paris, before sailing for America:

"My Dear Friend,—The bearer of this is a young man that wishes to go to America. He is willing to do anything on board a ship to lessen the expense of his passage. If you know any captain to whom such a person may be useful I will be obliged to you to speak to him about it.

"As Mr. Otte was to come to Paris in order to go to America, I wanted to take a passage with him, but as he stays in England to negotiate some arrangements of commerce, I have given up that idea. I wait now for the arrival of a person from England whom I want to see, after which, I shall bid adieu to restless and wretched Europe. I am with affectionate esteem to you and Mrs. Rotch,

"Yours,

"THOMAS PAINE."

About this time Sir Robert Smyth died, and another of the ties that had kept Paine in France was broken. He decided to return to America at once, and the Bonnevilles promised to follow him as soon as practicable. His old friend Clio Rickman came over from London to see him off, and observed that "he did not drink spirits, and wine he took moderately; he even objected to any spirits being laid in

as part of his sea-stock." Rickman accompanied Paine to Havre, where, on September 1, Paine embarked for the United States, landing at Baltimore on October 30, 1802.

Political circumstances—probably he was under the surveillance of Napoleon—made it impossible for Nicolas Bonneville to follow his friend to America, but Madame Bonneville and their three children, Benjamin, Thomas and Louis, arrived in the United States soon after Paine. This is evident from the following letter, dated at Washington, November 15, 1802, written by Paine to "My dear Madame and my dear Boys," in care of "Mrs. Hunt's boarding-house, No. 127 Main Street, Norfolk, Virginia." This hitherto unpublished letter is owned by the Thomas Paine National Historical Association:

"I this moment received your letter with great pleasure, for I was anxious for your safety on the passage, as the weather with us was several times stormy. You enclose me a bill for £22:10 s. sterling, payable to Capt. Stanley, for the balance of your passage. I will be obliged to Capt. Stanley to tell me in what manner I shall remit the money to him, and it shall be done immediately. I have written to Col. Kirkbride, of Bordentown, in the State of New Jersey, who will expect your coming there, and from whom you will receive every friendship. I expect to be there

myself in about a month or five weeks. If you are in want of money to continue your journey to Bordentown, I will be obliged to any of my friends in Norfolk to supply you, and I will remit it to them as soon as I am informed of it. I can depend on your economy in the use of it, and you and the poor boys can rest upon my friendship. I am not personally acquainted with Col. Newton, of Norfolk, but I find he is a friend of Mr. Madison, the Secretary of State, and if Col. Newton will be so kind as to supply you with what money you may want, I will repay it immediately into the hands of Mr. Madison, or remit it to him thro' the Postmaster.

"I suppose your best way will be to come up the bay by the packet to Baltimore, and from thence to Philadelphia and Bordentown. If you should have to stay two or three days at Baltimore, enquire for Capt. Clark, Bond street, No. 102. He is the captain of the ship in which I came. I shall write to Mrs. Clark to inform her of your coming.

"The letter you have from Mr. Mercier for Mr. Jefferson you can enclose under cover to me, either from Norfolk, or more conveniently from Baltimore, if you come that way. Mr. Murray, a merchant, who several times called upon me at your house in Paris, lives now in Baltimore, but I do not know his address. Embrace the poor boys for me and tell them they will soon see me at Bordentown. I shall write again to Col. Kirkbride to inform him of your arrival.

"Your sincere affectionate friend,

"THOMAS PAINE."

Parenthetically, an interesting letter * from Eben Elmer, a member of Congress, to David Moore, Deerfield, Cumberland County, New Jersey, dated Washington, December 11, 1802, never before published, makes mention of Paine and the difficulty he was experiencing in finding a publisher for "The Age of Reason," Part III. It is to be noted that President Jefferson "advised and requested" his friend Paine not to publish the work, and that Paine "says that he never was nor ever will be advised on that subject."

Sir: "I embrace this leisurely period of the session in writing to you. . . . The House of Representatives formed on Tuesday, but a quorum of Senate have not yet attended, consequently no business of consequence has been transacted. We shall not be ready to receive the President's Message before Tuesday or Wednesday next.

"I have waited on the President twice and dined with him once. He says he has very little to recommend to the attention of Congress. Our National affairs generally are in a pleasing situation. Mr. Gallatin says everything looks smiling in his department. The bank stock, about which so much noise has been made, was sold advantageously and by order of the Commissioners of the sinking fund in compliance with a former law.

"Every demand on the Treasury has been discharged

* Original letter in possession of the Thomas Paine National Historical Association.

whether ordinary or extraordinary, and a balance remained therein of near five millions of dollars.

"Mr. Paine has what he calls his 3d part of "The Age of Reason" in manuscript which he wishes published. The President has advised and requested him not to do it; but he says that he never was nor never will be advised on that subject; but as he will pay no expence, nor have any hand in the sale of the work I do not believe any printer will take his manuscript off his hands. He is more corpulent than formerly, and has become remarkably temperate.

"Jersey affairs are the subject of much conversation here. As might be expected each party is commended and their opponents condemned by their political friends. The most judicious Republicans are of opinion you could not have done better, every circumstance considered. Each party construe the occurrence as auguring good to their cause; but upon the whole I am of opinion it will have very little effect on the cause.

"It should teach the Republicans to keep their eyes open, and to attend to their concerns with fidelity and care. The time has come in which common prudence forbids any confidence in our active opponents. The forged letters to the President, attributed to Rutledge, will cause much uneasiness here. He has not arrived, and when he does it is hard to predict what measures he will pursue. I have compared the spurious letters with acknowledged ones of his, and must say there are strong marks of all being written by the same hand.

"I am Sir,

"Your humble servant,

"EBEN ELMER."

Other correspondence shows that one of the Bonneville boys, Thomas, who was Paine's godson, was placed with the Rev. Mr. Foster (Universalist) at Stonington, Connecticut, for education. Madame Bonneville and her other two sons were installed at Paine's Bordentown house, it being her intention to support herself and children by teaching French.

Thomas Paine does not seem to have been living at Bordentown at this time, but after quitting Washington went to New York City and there resided. Meanwhile Nicholas Bonneville remained in Paris, as appears from the following letter, dated New York, March 1, 1804, from Paine to Citizen Skipwith, American Commercial Agent in the French capital:

"Dear Friend—I have just a moment to write you a line by a friend who is on the point of sailing for Bordeaux. The Republican interest is now completely triumphant. The change within this last year has been great. We have now 14 States out of 17,—N. Hampshire, Mass. and Connecticut stand out. I much question if any person will be started against Mr. Jefferson. Burr is rejected for the Vice-Presidency; he is now putting up for Governor of N. York. Mr. Clinton will be run for Vice-President. Morgan Lewis, Chief Justice of the State of N. Y., is the Republican candidate for Governor of that State.

"I have not received a line from Paris, except a letter from Este, since I left it. We have now been nearly 80

days without news from Europe. What is Barlow about? I have not heard anything from him except that he is *always* coming. What is Bonneville about? Not a line has been received from him. Respectful compliments to Mr. Livingston and family. Yours in friendship."

Madame Bonneville, whose command of English was limited, found Bordentown dull, and removed to New York, where she engaged in an unprofitable business venture, and we next hear of her keeping house for Paine on his farm at New Rochelle, presented to him by the State of New York. In a letter to Jefferson at the time, Paine wrote:

"It is a pleasant and healthy situation, commanding a prospect always green and peaceable, as New Rochelle produces a great deal of grass and hay. The farm contains three hundred acres, about one hundred of which is meadow land, one hundred grazing and tillage land, and the remainder woodland. It is an oblong about a mile and a half in length. I have sold off sixty-one acres and a half for four thousand and twenty dollars. With this money I shall improve the other part, and build an addition 34 feet by 32 to the present dwelling."

With a mulatto cook, Rachel Gidney, the household seemed to be getting on in comfortable circumstances, when, on Christmas Eve of 1803, an event occurred which nearly proved tragic to Paine. It is

related in a letter he wrote from New Rochelle to William Carver, New York, dated January 16, 1805:

"ESTEEMED FRIEND,—I have recd. two letters from you, one giving an account of your taking Thomas (Bonneville) to Mr. Foster—the other dated Jany. 12—I did not answer the first because I hoped to see you the next Saturday or the Saturday after. What you heard of a gun being fired into the room is true—Robert and Rachel were both gone out to keep Christmas Eve and about eight o'clock at night the gun was fired. I ran immediately out, one of Mr. Dean's boys with me, but the person that had done it was gone. I directly suspected who it was, and I halloed to him by name, that *he was discovered.* I did this that the party who fired might know I was on the watch. I cannot find any ball, but whatever the gun was charged with passed through about three or four inches below the window making a hole large enough for a finger to go through—the muzzle must have been very near as the place is black with the powder, and the glass of the window is shattered to pieces. Mr. Shute, after examining the place and getting what information could be had, issued a warrant to take up Derrick,* and after examination committed him.

"He is now on bail (five hundred dollars) to take his trial at the Supreme Court in May next. Derrick owes me forty-eight dollars for which I have his note, and he was to work it out in making stone fence which he has not even begun, and besides this I have had to pay forty-two pounds

* Derrick appears by the records at White Plains to have been brought up for trial May 19, 1806, and to have been held in $500 bail, as Paine says. There is no record of the penalty he paid. It is probable that Paine did not press the charge.

eleven shillings for which I had passed my word for him at Mr. Pelton's store. Derrick borrowed the gun under pretence of giving Mrs. Bayeaux a Christmas gun. He was with Purdy about two hours before the attack on the house was made and he came from thence to Dean's half drunk and brought with him a bottle of rum, and Purdy was with him when he was taken up.

"I am exceedingly well in health and shall always be glad to see you. Hubbs tells me that your horse is getting better. Mrs. Shute sent for the horse and took him when the first snow came but he leaped the fences and came back. Hubbs says there is a bone broke. If this be the case I suppose he has broke or cracked it in leaping a fence when he was lame on the other hind leg, and hung with his hind legs in the fence. I am glad to hear what you tell me of Thomas. He shall not want for anything that is necessary if he be a good boy for he has no friend but me. You have not given me any account about the meeting house. Remember me to our Friends. Yours in friendship."

Unperturbed by the attempt made on his life a few days before, Paine wrote to Jefferson, January 1, 1805 (from New Rochelle), what may be regarded as a foreshadowing of the Monroe Doctrine:

"Dear Sir,—I have some thoughts of coming to Washington this winter, as I may as well spend a part of it there as elsewhere. But lest bad roads or any other circumstance should prevent me I suggest a thought for your consideration, and I shall be glad if in this case, as in that of Lou-

isiana, we may happen to think alike without knowing what each other had thought of.

"The affair of Domingo will cause some trouble in either of the cases in which it now stands. If armed merchantmen force their way through the blockading fleet it will embarrass us with the French government; and, on the other hand, if the people of Domingo think that we show a partiality to the French injurious to them there is danger they will turn pirates upon us, and become more injurious on account of vicinity than the Barbary powers, and England will encourage it, as she encourages the Indians. Domingo is lost to France either as to the government or the possession of it. But if a way could be found out to bring about a peace between France and Domingo through the mediation, and under the guarantee of the United States, it would be beneficial to all parties, and give us a great commercial and political standing, not only with the present people of Domingo but with the West Indies generally. And when we have gained their confidence by acts of justice and friendship, they will listen to our advice in matters of civilization and government, and prevent the danger of their becoming pirates, which I think they will be, if driven to desperation.

"The United States is the only power that can undertake a measure of this kind. She is now the parent of the Western world, and her knowledge of the local circumstances of it gives her an advantage in a matter of this kind superior to any European nation. She is enabled by situation, and grow[ing] importance to become a guarantee, and to see, as far as her advice and influence can operate, that the conditions on the part of Domingo be fulfilled. It

is also a measure that accords with the humanity of her principles, with her policy, and her commercial interest.

"All that Domingo wants of France is that France agree to let her alone, and withdraw her forces by sea and land; and in return for this Domingo to give her a monopoly of her commerce for a term of years,—that is, to import from France all the utensils and manufactures she may have occasion to use or consume (except such as she can more conveniently procure from the manufactories of the United States), and to pay for them in produce. France will gain more by this than she can expect to do even by a conquest of the island, and the advantage to America will be that she will become the carrier of both, at least during the present war.

"There was considerable dislike in Paris against the expedition to Domingo; and the events that have since taken place were then often predicted. The opinion that generally prevailed at that time was that the commerce of the island was better than the conquest of it,—that the conquest could not be accomplished without destroying the negroes, and in that case the island would be of no value.

"I think it might be signified to the French government, yourself being the best judge of the means, that the United States are disposed to undertake an accommodation so as to put an end to this otherwise endless slaughter on both sides, and to procure to France the best advantages in point of commerce that the state of things will admit of. Such an offer, whether accepted or not, cannot but be well received, and may lead to a good end.

"There is now a fine snow, and if it continues I intend to set off for Philadelphia in about eight days, and from

thence to Washington. I congratulate your constituents on the success of the election for President and Vice-President.

"Yours in friendship,

"THOMAS PAINE."

The foregoing letter is remarkable as enunciating the principles of the Monroe Doctrine eighteen years before Paine's friend, James Monroe, made his famous promulgation. Paine makes a pointed reference to the matter of the Louisiana Purchase, which he had suggested to Jefferson a short time after he (Paine) had returned to America in 1802. (Vol. X, p. 93.) It was an extraordinary coincidence that Jefferson was already contemplating the purchase of Louisiana from France, though it was a profound secret, as Jefferson told Paine at the time.

Madame Bonneville did not find life on a farm congenial, and presently made her way to New York. The philosophic solitude in which Paine was left at New Rochelle is set forth in a letter (July 31) to John Fellows, an auctioneer in New York City, one of his closest friends:

"It is certainly best that Mrs. Bonneville go into some family as a teacher, for she has not the least talent for managing affairs for herself. She may send Bebia * up to

* Her son Benjamin, who graduated from West Point and later became a brigadier-general in the Civil War.

me. I will take care of him for his own sake and his father's, but that is all I have to say. . . . I am master of an empty house, or nearly so. I have six chairs and a table, a straw-bed, a feather-bed, and a bag of straw for Thomas, a tea kettle, an iron pot, an iron baking pan, a frying pan, a gridiron, cups, saucers, plates and dishes, knives and forks, two candlesticks and a pair of snuffers. I have a pair of fine oxen and an ox-cart, a good horse, a chair, and a one-horse cart; a cow, and a sow and 9 pigs. When you come you must take such fare as you meet with, for I live upon tea, milk, fruit-pies, plain dumplins, and a piece of meat when I get it; but I live with that retirement and quiet that suit me. Mrs. Bonneville was an encumbrance upon me all the while she was here, for she would not do anything, not even make an apple dumplin for her own children. If you cannot make yourself up a straw bed, I can let you have blankets, and you will have no occasion to go over to the tavern to sleep.

"As I do not see any Federal papers, except by accident, I know not if they have attempted any remarks or criticisms on my Eighth Letter, [or] the piece on Constitutional Governments and Charters, the two numbers on Turner's letter, and also the piece on Hulbert. As to anonymous paragraphs, it is not worth noticing them. I consider the generality of such editors only as a part of their press, and let them pass.—I want to come to Morrisania, and it is probable I may come on to N. Y., but I wish you to answer this letter first.—Yours in friendship."

It is not to be inferred from what Paine says of Madame Bonneville that their relations were strained.

She was a Frenchwoman thirty-one years younger than Paine, fond of the world and animated, if not good-looking. The old gentleman, whose days were spent at his writing table, could give her little companionship, even if he could have conversed in French. But he indulged her to the limit of his financial ability, and was equally generous to her children, who remained with him at New Rochelle. In New York, Madame Bonneville found employment as a teacher of French in several families and apparently was self-supporting.

Meanwhile Paine's pecuniary situation began to give him anxiety. He was earning nothing, his means were found to be much less than he supposed, the needs of the Bonneville boys increasing. In view of the important defensive articles Paine had written for President Jefferson, and their long friendship, he ventured, in the Fall of 1805, to allude to his situation and to remind the President that his State, Virginia, had once proposed to give him a tract of land, but had not done so. He suggests that Congress should take steps toward granting him some recompense.

"But I wish you to be assured that whatever event this proposal may take it will make no alteration in my prin-

ciples or my conduct. I have been a volunteer to the world for thirty years without taking profits from anything I have published in America or Europe. I have relinquished all profits that those publications might come cheap among the people for whom they were intended.—Yours in friendship."

No reply from President Jefferson is known to be in existence.

After some months spent in New York, where he boarded with William Carver at 36 Cedar Street, the early part of 1806 found Paine back in New Rochelle in poor health and so reduced in finances that, in order to support the Bonnevilles, he had to sell his Bordentown, New Jersey, property. His hint to Jefferson of his financial straits, and his reminder that Virginia had not yet awarded him the honorarium approved by both Jefferson and Madison, had brought no result. With all this, and the loss of early friendships, and the theological hornet's nest that had been stirred up by the circulation in America of his theological writings, Paine began to feel that his return from Europe was a mistake. He dwelt a stranger in his Promised Land.

To cap the climax, in that year of 1806, while at New Rochelle, Paine attempted to vote at a local election, and his ballot was refused on the ground that

he was not an American citizen! The judge of the election maintained that the former American Minister to France, Gouverneur Morris, had refused to reclaim Paine from a French prison because he was not an American, and that President Washington had taken the same attitude. There was not any question of Paine's qualification as a voter on other grounds than that. He announced his intention of suing the judge and inspectors of election, but meanwhile he had to leave the polls in humiliation. It was the irony of fate that this founder of Republics and inspirer of the Declaration of Independence should have his American citizenship challenged and denied in New Rochelle where he was buried and his grave desecrated.

And now his health became seriously impaired. An intimation of it appears in a letter, dated from New York, August, 1806, to Andrew Dean (Vol. IX, p. 293), to whom he had rented his farm at New Rochelle. In it he speaks of having suffered a stroke of apoplexy and adds, "I have passed through an experiment of dying, and I find death has no terrors for me. . . . As I am well enough to sit up some hours in the day, though not well enough to get up without help, I employ myself as I have always done, in endeavoring to bring man to the right use of the reason that God has given him, and to direct his mind

immediately to his Creator, and not to fanciful secondary beings called mediators, as if God were superannuated or ferocious."

The man who, as Jefferson wrote, "steadily labored, and with as much effect as any man living," to secure America freedom, was living—or rather dying—in a miserable lodging-house, 63 Partition, now Fulton, Street, New York. He had gone there for economy. Later, in July, 1808, Paine found a more comfortable abode with a Mrs. Ryder, near whose house Madame Bonneville and two of her sons resided. The house was on Herring Street (now 309 Bleecker Street), and there Paine wrote a brief letter "To the Federal Faction," warning the Federalists against endangering American commerce by abusing France and Bonaparte, and provoking a retaliatory navigation act that would exclude American ships from Europe. "The United States have flourished, unrivalled in commerce, fifteen or sixteen years. But it is not a permanent state of things. It arose from the circumstances of the war, and most probably will change at the close of the present war. The Federalists gave provocation enough to promote it."

Such was the last letter Thomas Paine ever published. Seven serene months went by. Towards the latter part of January, 1809, he was very feeble. On

the eighteenth day of that month he wrote and signed his Will, in which he reaffirms his theistic faith. On the first day of February the Committee of Claims reported unfavorably on his memorial to Congress, petitioning payment for past services, although the Committee condescendingly recorded: "That Mr. Paine rendered great and eminent services to the United States during their struggle for liberty and independence cannot be doubted by any person acquainted with his labors in the cause, and attached to the principles of the contest."

On February 25, 1809, he developed a fever, and a doctor was called in. His landlady attributed his indisposition to his having ceased taking stimulants, and their resumption was prescribed. A fortnight later symptoms of dropsy appeared. Toward the end of April Paine was removed to a house on the present site of 59 Grove Street, Madame Bonneville taking up a residence under the same roof. The owner of the house was William A. Thompson, once a law partner of Aaron Burr, and whose wife, *née* Maria Holdron, was a niece of Elihu Palmer, editor of the magazine to which Paine contributed the "Prospect Papers" (Vol. IX, p. 83). The entire rear portion of the house was given up to the noted invalid and everything possible was done to make him comfort-

able. Reports of neglect on the part of Madame Bonneville are entirely without foundation. She gave all the time she could spare from her duties as a French teacher to her benefactor, and did her best for him. The only available professional nurse was a woman named Hedden, who combined piety and deception. Dr. Romaine, who attended Paine, was at the head of his profession in New York, but the nurse managed to enlist the services of a Dr. Manly, who turned out to be a spying agent of James Cheetham, Paine's calumnious biographer.

Madame Bonneville testifies in her narrative recollections of Thomas Paine that he had no fear of death, but rather had a fear of living too long. His was some such fear as that of Voltaire when entering his house at Ferney during an electric storm. He was not afraid of lightning, he said, but of what the parish priest would make of it should he be struck. Paine had some reason to apprehend that the zealots who had placarded the devil flying away with him might supplement their prediction by body-snatching. His disinclination to be left alone, ascribed to superstitious terror, was due to determined and repeated efforts to extract a recantation from him.

Realizing that his illness was mortal, Paine solemnly reaffirmed his theistic opinions in the presence

of Madame Bonneville, Dr. Romaine, Captain Pelton and Thomas Nixon. For some time no food would stay on his stomach. In such weakness and helplessness he was for many days about as miserable as his calumniators could desire, and his best friends were not sorrowful when the peace of death approached. His mind was active to the last. Shortly before the end he made a humorous retort to Dr. Romaine.

Toward the end, two clergymen had gained access to the dying man and to their questionings of his religious opinions Paine simply said: "Let me alone; good morning." Madame Bonneville asked if he were satisfied with the treatment he had received during his illness, and he replied a bit wearily, "Oh yes." Those were the last words of Thomas Paine. After a tranquil night, death came to him on the morning of June 8, 1809, the year in which Abraham Lincoln and Charles Darwin were born.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

Victory After Defeat

Stephen Girard's Tribute....Correspondence About "Infidelity" With Samuel Adams....Jefferson Invites Paine to Washington....Opposition to Paine Gathers Slowly....Letters to Jefferson and Fellows....Defence of Jefferson....Fighting Against Religious Superstition....The Break With Cheetham ....Cheetham's Defamatory Biography of Paine....Madame Bonneville Wins Suit for Libel....Mrs. Few at Paine's Death-Bed....Cobbett, a Detractor, Becomes a Disciple of Paine....Carries Paine's Bones to England....The First Monument to Thomas Paine....Slander Gives Way to Praise

IF they had only cut off Thomas Paine's head, he would then have been recorded in American schoolbooks as the Honorable Thomas Paine, assistant savior of his country, instead of being execrated as Tom Paine, the infidel," said Stephen Girard, founder of Girard College in Philadelphia, pioneer American philanthropist, and admiring friend of Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson and Thomas Paine. Girard refers, of course, to the great services Paine had rendered both to America and France before he wrote "The Age of Reason." But the leaders of the French Revolution delayed the guillotining of Paine, and Monroe got him out of the Luxembourg prison and nursed him back to life—and so Paine had an opportunity to challenge the shams and superstitions

of accepted theology, bringing upon himself the implacable fury of the paid retainers of all the religious sects.

Had his enemies succeeded in having Paine beheaded they might, as Stephen Girard asserted, have befriended his fame as a Republic-maker, and his name would have been enshrined in the hearts of his countrymen with Washington's, Jefferson's, Hamilton's and Franklin's, his statues crowned with laurel, and his writings inscribed in text books throughout the English-reading world.

Not long after Paine had returned to America from his fifteen-year sojourn in Europe, we find Samuel Adams writing him from Boston (November 30, 1802) that he had "heard" that he had "turned his mind to a defence of infidelity." Paine copied for Adams his creed from "The Age of Reason," and asked "My good friend, do you call believing in God infidelity?"

His letter to Adams, dated January 1, 1803, goes on to say:

"We cannot serve the Deity in the manner we serve those who cannot do without that service. He needs no service from us. We can add nothing to eternity. But it is in our power to render a service acceptable to Him, and that is, not by praying, but by endeavoring to make His creatures

happy. A man does not serve God by praying, for it is himself he is trying to serve; and as to hiring or paying men to pray, as if the Deity needed instruction, it is in my opinion an abomination. I have been exposed to and preserved through many dangers, but instead of buffeting the Deity with prayers, as if I distrusted Him, or must dictate to Him, I reposed myself on His protection; and you, my friend, will find, even in your last moments, more consolation in the silence of resignation than in the murmuring wish of a prayer."

Paine undoubtedly was keenly sensitive to a passage in the Adams communication in which the statement occurred: "Our friend, the President of the United States [Jefferson] has been calumniated for his liberal sentiments, by men who have attributed that liberality to a latent design to promote the cause of infidelity." It is significant that Jefferson managed to postpone a meeting with Paine, after thirteen years of separation, and this hesitancy on the part of the President prompted Paine to write Jefferson (January 12): "My intention was to have some conversation with you on matters . . . I have not informed you of. But you have not only shown no disposition towards it, but have, in some measure, by a sort of shyness, as if you stood in fear of Federal observation, precluded it. I am not the only one who makes observations of this kind." This at once

elicited an invitation from Jefferson, whom Paine visited for several days in Washington to the improvement of their mutual understanding.

As an indication, however, of the feeling that prevailed with regard to the discredited, or rather misunderstood, author of "The Age of Reason," we find him getting a cool reception in Philadelphia, *en route* from Washington to his old home at Bordentown, New Jersey. In the City of Brotherly Love his old friend Dr. Benjamin Rush carefully avoided him. "His principles," wrote Dr. Rush to the calumnious James Cheetham, who was to muddy the memory of Paine, biographically, "avowed in his 'Age of Reason,' were so offensive to me that I did not wish to renew my intercourse with him." On the other hand, we find perhaps the most eminent physician in America, Dr. Nicholas Romaine, having Paine as a guest of honor at a dinner in New York, where he met John Pintard and other leading citizens. Pintard remarked to Paine on that occasion: "I have read and re-read your 'Age of Reason,' and any doubts which I before entertained of the truth of revelation have been removed by your logic. Yes, sir, your very arguments against Christianity have convinced me of its truth." "Well then," countered Paine pleas-

antly, "I may return to my couch tonight with the consolation that I have made at least one Christian." This anecdote is vouched for by Dr. Francis, in his "Old New York," which also records that Pintard, thus given an impromptu lesson in politeness, was one of the founders of the Tammany Society, then becoming a power in metropolitan politics. With the Democratic-Republican Jefferson in the Presidential chair and with De Witt Clinton, of New York, Vice-President, Tammany was in the saddle; and to ride to victory it was prudent to court the clergy. Whereas Paine had once been acclaimed by Tammany as the author of "Rights of Man," there was no toast to the author of "The Age of Reason" in the Wigwam of 1803.

At the same time there is no evidence that Paine met with an actual open hostility on the part of his fellow-countrymen during the first years after his return. On January 25, 1805, he acquainted Jefferson with his plan to publish a collected edition of his writings, beginning with "Common Sense," to be sold by subscription. He did not believe the prejudice against his theological views was sufficiently strong to jeopardize the success of the undertaking. As he went on to say in a letter to Jefferson:

"There is more hypocrisy than bigotry in America. When I was in Connecticut the summer before last, I fell in company with some Baptists among whom were three ministers. The conversation turned on the election for President, and one of them who appeared to be a leading man said 'They cry out against Mr. Jefferson because, they say he, is a Deist. Well, a Deist may be a good man, and if he think it right, it is right to him. For my own part,' said he, 'I had rather vote for a Deist than for a blue-skin Presbyterian.' 'You judge right,' said I, 'for a man that is not of any of the sectaries will hold the balance even between all; but give power to a bigot of any sectary and he will use it to the oppression of the rest, as the blue-skins do in connection.' They all agree in this sentiment, and I have always found it assented to in any company I have had occasion to use it.

"I judge the collection I speak of will make five volumes octavo of four hundred pages each at two dollars a volume to be paid on delivery; and as they will be delivered separately, as fast as they can be printed and bound the subscribers may stop when they please. The three first volumes will be political and each piece will be accompanied with an account of the state of affairs at the time it was written, whether in America, France, or England, which will also show the occasion of writing it. The first expression in the first No. of the Crisis published the 10th December '76 is '*These are the times that try men's souls.*' It is therefore necessary as explanatory to the expression in all future times to show what those times were. The two last volumes will be theological and those who do not choose to take them may let them alone. They will have the right to

do so, by the conditions of the subscription. I shall also make a miscellaneous volume of correspondence, essays, and some pieces of poetry, which I believe will have some claim to originality." . . .

Early in the year that the foregoing letter was written, a series of charges reflecting on both the public and private character of the third President of the United States were published by one Hulbert, on the authority of Thomas Turner, a Virginia neighbor of Jefferson. Resurrecting an old charge of cowardice made and refuted by the Virginia Legislature while Jefferson was Governor of that State, the accusation recited instances of immorality, even naming persons and places. The scandalous publication drew from Paine the following letter, accompanying his reply to Jefferson's detractors, dated New Rochelle, July 19, 1805, and addressed to John Fellows, in New York:

"CITIZEN—I inclose you two pieces for Cheetham's paper,* which I wish you to give to him yourself. He may publish one No. in one daily paper, and the other number in the next daily paper, and then both in his country paper. There has been a great deal of anonymous abuse thrown out in the Federal papers against Mr. Jefferson, but until some names could be got hold of it was fighting the air to take

* The paper referred to was the *American Citizen*, edited by James Cheetham, to which Paine was at that time an intermittent contributor.

any notice of them. We have now got hold of two names, your townsman Hulbert, the hypocritical infidel of Sheffield, and Thomas Turner of Virginia, his correspondent. I have already given Hulbert a basting with my name to it, because he made use of my name in his speech in the Mass. legislature. Turner has not given me the same cause in the letter he wrote (and evidently) to Hulbert, and which Hulbert, (for it could be no other person) has published in the Repertory to vindicate himself. Turner has detailed his charges against Mr. Jefferson, and I have taken them up one by one, which is the first time the opportunity has offered for doing it; for before this it was promiscuous abuse. I have not signed it either with my name or signature (Common Sense) because I found myself obliged, in order to make such scoundrels feel a little smart, to go somewhat out of my usual manner of writing, but there are some sentiments and some expressions that will be supposed to be in my style, and I have no objection to that supposition, but I do not wish Mr. Jefferson to be *obliged* to know it is from me." . . .

Comparing the alleged specifications of immorality, Paine showed one to be manifestly absurd and the other to be without trustworthy foundation. As for the charge of cowardice, Paine maintained that it was the duty of a civil magistrate to move out of danger, as Congress had done in vacating Philadelphia during the dark hours of the Revolution. The article, which appeared in the *American Citizen* of July 23, was signed "A Spark from the Altar of '76,"

but the writer was generally known to be Thomas Paine, and the service done Jefferson was greater than may now be realized.

Nevertheless Paine went on suffering from a form of ostracism at the hands of a society which, as Henry Adams states, had once courted him "as the greatest literary genius of his day." Nor was it due entirely to religious differences of opinion which were shared by leading statesmen in the young Republic. A lingering distrust, if not dislike, of the common people was in the air. Deism had been an aristocratic cult, and Paine was guilty of carrying heresy to the people. Moreover, he had handed it around as a religion—as divine fire from the heaven that orthodoxy had monopolized. The popularity of his early pamphlets and his earnestness in attacking dogmas common to all sects, were regarded as revolutionary; and while the bigoted mob was strapping him to the rock of ages, and stoning him with such missiles as were at hand, people of education and social prominence were too prudent to advertise their sympathy, if they felt any.

We know now that there was very little difference between Paine's religious opinions and those of Washington or Jefferson or Franklin. These men, however, were too prudent to express their views, not

wishing to subject their prestige, gained in the service of their country, to attack by religious fanatics. Franklin's attitude was shown when he advised a writer not to publish a certain unorthodox pamphlet. "He who spits against the wind," wrote Franklin, "spits in his own face."

But Paine was not to be deterred by such considerations. He wanted to free not only the body from tyranny, but also the mind from superstition. The result was his "Age of Reason," and from the day of its publication he became the object of calumny. The fame of this great man passed slowly into a total eclipse, and only emerged into the light of day with the coming of our own twentieth-century era of toleration and enlightenment.

In addition, it was his misfortune to have incurred the implacable enmity of the aforementioned Cheetham, editor and publisher of the *American Citizen*, to which Paine was for some time a welcome contributor. Paine and Cheetham were never personal friends exactly, but they shared the same political views and Paine found in the *American Citizen* a sort of pulpit for his preachments. Later on, when he transferred his pen to a rival journal, *The Public Advertiser*, newly founded and edited by a Mr. Frank, Cheetham was probably infuriated at the loss of a valued con-

tributor. For Paine had a large following, and his audience was not the less appreciative in that it comprehended the masses as well as the classes. The popular Mayor of New York, De Witt Clinton, was among the admirers of Paine. Consequently, to overcome the dwindling prestige of his publication Cheetham began a journalistic attack on Paine, falsely charging him with having "stuck very correctly to his pen in a safe retreat" during the Revolutionary War, and that his "Rights of Man" was an echo of Locke. Cheetham published a correspondence purporting to have passed between Paine and William Carver, at whose house in New York Paine had boarded in 1806, in which Paine complained of being badly and dishonestly treated while there. To this a reply was printed, signed by Carver, but evidently written by the editor-publisher. In support of this statement may be cited a letter by Judge Tabor, a friend of Paine and an associate of John Fellows in editing the New York *Beacon*, in 1836. He says:

"I visited Carver, in company with Col. Fellows, and naturally conversed with the old man about Paine. He said that the allegation that Paine was a drunkard was altogether without foundation. In speaking of his letter to Paine which Cheetham published, Carver said that he was angry when he wrote it and that he wrote unwisely, as angry

men generally do; that Cheetham obtained the letter under false pretences and printed it without authority.

"Col. Fellows and Judge Hertell visited Paine throughout the whole course of his last illness. They repeatedly conversed with him on religious topics and they declared that he died serenely, philosophically and resignedly. This information I had directly from their own lips, and their characters were so spotless, and their integrity so unquestioned, that more reliable testimony it would be impossible to give."

Some time after Paine's death, his self-constituted "biographer" Cheetham was the defendant in a libel suit brought by Madame Bonneville, in which the aforenamed Carver was a witness, declaring that "he had never seen the slightest indication of any meretricious or illicit commerce between Paine and Madame Bonneville, that they never were alone together, and that the three Bonneville children were alike the objects of Paine's care." Counsellor Sampson, prosecuting the case for Madame Bonneville (and no friend of Paine), perceived that Paine's Will, naming Madame Bonneville executrix of his estate, was at the bottom of the business. Cheetham was not named in the Will. "That is the key to this mysterious league of apostolic slanderers, mortified, expectant and disappointed speculators," Sampson thundered. His invective was such that Cheetham claimed protection of the court, intimating a duel. Sampson

took out his snuff-box, and motioning toward the defendant, said:

"If he complains of personalities, he who is hardened in every gross abuse, he who lives reviling and reviled, who might construct himself a monument with no other materials but those records to which he is a party, and in which he stands enrolled as an offender: if he cannot sit still to hear his accusation, but calls for the protection of the court against a counsel whose duty it is to make his crimes appear, how does *she* deserve protection, whom he has driven to the sad necessity of coming here to vindicate her honor, from those personalities he has lavished on her?"

The jury returned a unanimous verdict in favor of Madame Bonneville.

Near the end Paine had a reminder of what his principles and beliefs had cost him that must have cut him to the quick. Albert Gallatin, whom Jefferson appointed Secretary of the Treasury in 1801 and who retained that post for twelve years, remained a staunch friend to Paine, but his relatives, the Fews and Nicholsons, had severed relationship with the author they once so greatly admired. The woman for whom he had the deepest affection, in America, had been Kitty Nicholson, now Mrs. Few, whose husband was a distinguished Southern Congressman, as evidenced by their correspondence during Paine's

absence in Europe. Henry Adams, in his biography of Gallatin, says: "When confined to his bed with his last illness he [Paine] sent for Mrs. Few, who came to see him, and when they parted she spoke some words of comfort and religious hope. Poor Paine only turned his face to the wall, and kept silence." This is quite contradictory to the testimony of Rickman, the contemporary Paine biographer, who says that the Fews came of their own accord, and "Mrs. Few expressed a wish to renew their former friendship." Paine said to her, "very impressively, 'You have neglected me, and I beg that you will leave the room.' Mrs. Few went into the garden and wept bitterly." The authenticity of even this account is not established, but it must have been a sore trial to Paine to have his once dear friend, after ignoring him six years, to return with the Grey Reaper.

Paine had endeavored to organize in New York a Society for Religious Inquiry, and did form a Society of Theophilanthropy. In the official organ of the latter, *The Theophilanthropist*, his posthumous works began to appear soon after his death. Theophilanthropy, in many guises and translations, is now to be discovered in every religion and in every sect. As Conway, the great Paine biographer, observes, "The real cultivators of skepticism—those who

ascribe to Deity biblical barbarism, and the savagery of nature—have had their day."

Another detractor of Thomas Paine who lived to see the error of his ways was William Cobbett, an Englishman who came to America in 1792, after living a while in Paris. While in France he had been influenced by a libellous life of Paine written by George Chalmers, which had not been reprinted in America. He reproduced the statements of that work in a brief biographical sketch published in Philadelphia, in 1796. In later life Cobbett became convinced that he had been misled into giving fresh currency to a tissue of slanders. In the very year of this publication, Paine brought out his "Decline and Fall of the English System of Finance" (Vol. V. p. 255) which filled Cobbett with admiration and became a text-book to him. In his *Register*, Cobbett was eloquent in praise of Paine, the more earnestly, he confessed, because he "had been one of his most violent assailants. . . . Old age having laid a hand upon this truly great man, this truly philosophical politician, at his expiring *flambeau* I lighted my taper."

It was Cobbett who removed the bones of Thomas Paine from where they had been placed on his New Rochelle estate, near the site of the present Paine Monument, and took them to England in 1819. He

contemplated raising a monument to Paine in England, but it was never done. The project caused considerable parliamentary and municipal excitement at the time. In Bolton, England, the town-crier was imprisoned nine times for proclaiming the arrival of Paine's bones, which, in 1839, passed with Cobbett's effects into the hands of a receiver named West.

The Lord Chancellor refusing to regard the bones as an asset, they were kept by a day-laborer, whose name is not recorded, until 1844, when they passed to one B. Tilley, 13 Bedford Street, London, a furniture dealer. In 1849 the empty coffin was in possession of J. Chennell, Guildford. The silver plate bore the inscription "Thomas Paine, died June 8, 1809, aged 72." In 1854, Rev. R. Ainslee (Unitarian) told E. Truelove that he owned "the skull and the right hand of Thomas Paine," but evaded subsequent inquiries. The removal of the bones caused excitement in America. Of Paine's gravestone a fragment was preserved by his friends in the Bayeaux family, in New Rochelle, with whom Paine had lodged at one time, and was framed on their wall. The entire gravestone has since been recovered and is now in the possession of the Thomas Paine National Historical Association.

In November, 1839, a monument at New Rochelle was erected through the efforts of Gilbert Vale, editor of the New York *Beacon*, a Freethought weekly, and author of the first life of Paine that justified the title. There were nearly two hundred contributors to the fund. Shortly after the unveiling, the architect, John Frazee, wrote Vale the following letter concerning the monument, which commemorates the greatness of Thomas Paine:

"Will you please to inform our friends that the monument to Thomas Paine is erected? On Friday last, I took with me a rigger and went up to the quarries, and on that day we got the marble to the spot, with the machinery and other apparatus necessary to the work. At an early hour on Saturday morning we mustered all hands at the grave, and commenced the erection of the monument in good earnest and in good spirits. Everything worked well and at 3 o'clock p. m., the crown-piece was on, and the erection complete. No person was hurt nor any part of the work broken or injured. The people up there say it is a chaste and beautiful structure. Its purely Grecian character and simplicity of form render its general effect truly impressive and interesting. The summit is 12½ feet above the level of the road at that point.

"During the progress of erection we had quite a good many visitors from the neighborhood round about—men, women and children; and not the monument alone, but the machinery and manner of raising the stones seemed a curiosity of no little interest to them, so much so that, although

the weather was cold and blustering, many of the good matrons, with their rosy-cheeked daughters, stuck by us until the last stone was laid, and by their presence, kind looks and kind words, gave strong testimony of their warmest approbation, not only of our handiwork in the monument, but also of the high and important objects of its erection. Indeed, I was much pleased to find that among the number of fifty persons or more that were assembled to witness our labors not an unkind look was seen, nor an unfriendly expression heard during the time. All looked and spoke as though their hearts were glad at seeing such marked regard, such noble and lasting honor paid to the GREAT PATRIOT of our Revolution, and the defender of the rights of man. I have a little trimming to do yet on the head (on the front of the shaft) which will occupy me the best part of a day. This I will endeavor to accomplish this week, when the monument will be completed."

Vale then advertised the completion of the monument and an excursion to New Rochelle for its dedication.

In 1899, the colossal bronze bust was placed on the cap-piece of the shaft. In 1905, the monument was rededicated before a large assemblage and transferred to the custody of the city of New Rochelle. Succeeding years have brought a growing appreciation of this courageous reformer.

The world has done well to change its dirge of slander to a pæan of praise for that brave soldier of humanity whom Moncure Conway described as "the great Commoner of Mankind, founder of the Republic of the World, and Emancipator of the human mind and heart—Thomas Paine."

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Thomas Paine to Hon. Henry Laurens

THIS autobiographical sketch was enclosed in the accompanying letter of January 14, 1779, to Henry Laurens, who had resigned the Presidency of the Continental Congress during the previous December. Paine had resigned as Secretary to the Foreign Affairs Committee six days before this sketch was written. Their resignations were a feature of the exposure of Silas Deane's frauds by Paine in a series of articles signed "Common Sense." Deane was charged with misappropriating public funds while acting as business agent of the United States in France, in 1776-7. Laurens had staunchly supported Paine in breaking up the "ring" with which Deane was identified in Paris.

There were rumors of duels at the time, and Paine's apprehensions about his friend probably refers to them. Egotistical as this sketch may appear, Paine omits facts that would have shed great honor upon him.

SIR: My anxiety for your *personal* safety has not only fixed a profound silence upon me, but prevents my asking you a great many questions, lest I should be the unwilling, unfortunate cause of new difficulties or fatal consequences to you, and in such a case I might indeed say, "*'T is the survivor dies.*"

I omitted sending the inclosed in the morning as I intended. It will serve you to parry ill nature and ingratitude with, when undeserved reflections are cast upon me.

I certainly have some awkward natural feeling, which I never shall get rid of. I was sensible of a

kind of shame at the Minister's door to-day, lest any one should think I was going to solicit a pardon or a pension. When I come to you I feel only an *unwillingness* to be seen, on your account. I shall never make a courtier, I see that.

I am your obedient humble servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

January 14, 1779.

SIR,—For your amusement I give you a short history of my conduct since I have been in America.

I brought with me letters of introduction from Dr. Franklin. These letters were with a flying seal, that I might, if I thought proper, close them with a wafer. One was to Mr. Bache of this city. The terms of Dr. Franklin's recommendation were "*a worthy, ingenious, etc.*" My particular design was to establish an academy on the plan they are conducted in and about London, which I was well acquainted with.* I came some months before Dr. Franklin, and waited here for his arrival. In the meantime a person of this city desired me to give him some assistance in conducting a magazine, which I did without making any bargain.† The work turned out very profitable. Dr.

* In 1767 Paine was usher in a school in Kensington, London.

† Robert Aitkin. This was the *Pennsylvania Magazine.*—*Editor.*

Witherspoon had likewise a concern [in] it. At the end of six months I thought it necessary to come to some contract. I agreed to leave the matters to arbitration. The bookseller mentioned two on his own part—Mr. Duché, your late chaplain, and Mr. Hopkinson. I agreed to them and declined mentioning any on my part. But the bookseller getting information of what Mr. Duché's private opinion was, withdrew from the arbitration, or rather refused to go into it, as our agreement to abide by it was only verbal. I was requested by several literary gentlemen in this city to undertake such a work on my own account, and I could have rendered it very profitable.

As I always had a taste to science, I naturally had friends of that cast in England; and among the rest George Lewis Scott, Esq., through whose formal introduction my first acquaintance with Dr. Franklin commenced.* I esteem Mr. Scott as one of the most amiable characters I know of, but his particular situation had been that in the minority of the present King he was his sub-preceptor, and from the occasional traditionary accounts yet remaining in the family of Mr. Scott, I obtained the true character of the present

* Scott was a Commissioner of the Board of Excise, by which Paine had been employed.—*Editor.*

King from his childhood upwards, and, you may naturally suppose, of the present ministry. I saw the people of this country were all wrong, by an ill-placed confidence. After the breaking out of hostilities I was confident their design was a total conquest. I wrote to Mr. Scott in May, 1775, by Captain James Josiah, now in this city. I read the letter to him before I closed it. I used in it this free expression: "Surely the ministry are all mad; they never will be able to conquer America." The reception which the last petition of Congress met with put it past a doubt that such was their design, on which I determined with myself to write the pamphlet '[Common] Sense.' As I knew the time of the Parliament meeting, and had no doubt what sort of King's speech it would produce, my contrivance was to have the pamphlet come out just at the time the speech might arrive in America, and so fortunate was I in this cast of policy that both of them made their appearance in this city on the same day.* The first edition was printed by Bell on the recommendation of Dr. Rush. I gave him the pamphlet on the following conditions: That if any loss should arise I would pay it—and in order to make him industrious in circulating it, I gave him one-half the profits, if it should produce any. I gave

* Common Sense" appeared January 10, 1776.—*Editor.*

a written order to Col. Joseph Dean and Capt. Thos. Prior, both of this city, to receive the other half, and lay it out for mittens for the troops that were going to Quebec. I did this to do honor to the cause. Bell kept the whole, and abused me into the bargain. The price he set upon them was two shillings. I then enlarged the pamphlet with an appendix and an address to the Quakers, which made it one-third bigger than before, printed 6,000 at my own expense, 3,000 by B. Towne, 3,000 by Cist & Steyner, and delivered them ready stitched and fit for sale to Mr. Bradford at the Coffee-house; and though the work was thus increased, and consequently should have borne a higher price, yet, in order that it might produce the general service I wished, I confined Mr. Bradford to sell them at only one shilling each, or tenpence by the dozen, and to enable him to do this, with sufficient advantage to himself, I let him have the pamphlets at 8½d. Pennsylvania currency each.

The sum of 8½d. each was reserved to defray the expense of printing, paper, advertising, etc., and such as might be given away. The state of the account at present is that I am £39 11s. out of pocket, being the difference between what I have paid for printing, etc., and what I have received from Bradford. He has a sufficiency in his hands to balance with and clear me,

which is all I aimed at, but by his unaccountable dilatoriness and unwillingness to settle accounts I fear I shall be obliged to sustain a real loss exclusive of my trouble.

I think the importance of that pamphlet was such that if it had not appeared, and that at the exact time it did, the Congress would not now have been sitting where they are. The light which that performance threw upon the subject gave a turn to the politics of America which enabled her to stand her ground. Independence followed in six months after it, although before it was published it was a dangerous doctrine to speak of, and that because it was not understood.

In order to accommodate that pamphlet to every man's purchase and to do honor to the cause, I gave up the profits I was justly entitled to, which in this city only would at the usual price of books [have] produced me £1,000 at that time a day, besides what I might have made by extending it to other States. I gave permission to the printers in other parts of this State [Pennsylvania] to print it on their own account. I believe the number of copies printed and sold in America was not short of 150,000—and is the greatest sale that any performance ever had since the use of letters,—exclusive of the great run it had in England and Ireland.

The doctrine of that book was opposed in the public newspapers under the signature of Cato, who, I believe, was Dr. Smith,* and I was sent for from New York to reply to him, which I did, and happily with success. My letters are under the signature of "The Forester." It was likewise opposed in a pamphlet signed "Plain Truth," but the performance was too weak to do any hurt or deserve any answer. In July following the publication of 'Common Sense' the Associators of this State † marched to Amboy under the command of Gen. Roberdeau. The command was large, yet there was no allowance for a secretary. I offered my service voluntarily, only that my expenses should be paid, all the charges I put Gen. Roberdeau to was $48; although he frequently pressed me to make free with his private assistance. After the Associators returned I went to Fort Lee, and continued with Gen. [Nathanael] Greene till the evacuation.

A few days after our army had crossed the Delaware on the 8th of December, 1776, I came to Philadelphia on public service, and, seeing the deplorable and melancholy condition the people were in, afraid to

* The Rev. William Smith, D.D., President of the University of Philadelphia.—*Editor.*

† The Flying Camp.—*Editor.*

speak and almost to think, the public presses stopped, and nothing in circulation but fears and falsehoods, I sat down, and in what I may call a passion of patriotism wrote the first number of the "Crisis." It was published on the 19th of December, which was the very blackest of times, being before the taking of the Hessians at Trenton. I gave that piece to the printer gratis, and confined him to the price of two coppers, which was sufficient to defray his charge.

I then published the second number, which, being as large again as the first number, I gave it to him on the condition of his taking only four coppers each. It contained sixteen pages.

I then published the third number, containing thirty-two pages, and gave it to the printer, confining him to ninepence.

When the account of the battle of Brandywine got to this city, the people were again in a state of fear and dread. I immediately wrote the fourth number [of the "Crisis"]. It contained only four pages, and as there was no less money than the sixth of dollars in general circulation, which would have been too great a price, I ordered 4,000 to be printed at my own private charge and given away.

The fifth number I gave Mr. Dunlap, at Lancaster. He, very much against my consent, set half

a crown upon it; he might have done it for a great deal less. The sixth and seventh numbers I gave in the papers. The seventh number would have made a pamphlet of twenty-four pages, and brought me in $3,000 or $4,000 in a very few days, at the price which it ought to have borne.

Monies received since I have been in America:

Salary for 17 months at 70 dollars per month *	1,190 dollars
For rations and occasional assistance at Fort Lee	141 ditto
For defraying the expense of a journey from East Town round by Morriss when secretary to the Indian Commission,† and some other matters, about 140 or 145 dollars	145 ditto
Total of public money	1,476

In the spring, 1776, some private gentleman, thinking it was too hard that I should, after giving away my profits for a public good, be money out of pocket on account of some expense I was put to—sent

* As Secretary of the Congressional Committee of Foreign Affairs, to which he was appointed April 17, 1777.—*Editor.*

† This commission met the Indian chiefs at Easton, Pa., in January, 1777.—*Editor.*

me by the hands of Mr. Christopher Marshall 108 dollars.

You have here, sir, a faithful history of my services and my rewards.

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